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Roads flooded, rivers in spate as rains batter states

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BUSINESS

For Netflix, India is 3rd country in revenue growth

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Women's Asia Cup: India Starts Campaign With 7-Wicket Win

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DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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Microsoft feels BLUE in biggest TECH DISASTER

A global outage brought the world to an unexpected halt

Passengers look at screens, one of them showing Blue Screen error, at T3 Terminal of the Indira Gandhi International Airport amid Microsoft outage, in New Delhi on Friday ***PHOTO: PTI***

NEW DELHI, 19 JULY

A global Microsoft outage plunged the world into an unexpected pause. Banks froze, flights grounded, and stock markets halted – anything dependent on Microsoft's vast infrastructure ground to a halt, leaving a trail of confusion and frustration in its wake.

IT companies in Bengaluru went into a tizzy amid the outage. Employees were unable to work for hours but were told to stay online. After Microsoft services were restored later in the day, many employees were forced to extend their working hours. Some firms in Whitefield allowed their employees to log out for the day.

Airport and airline operations across the country were almost crippled on Friday. IndiGo alone cancelled 192 flights.

In addition to this, hundreds of flights were delayed by a considerable time across airlines' networks due to the outage, which started from 10.40 am, according to sources.

A passenger shows a hand-written boarding pass amid the ongoing Microsoft outage, at the airport in New Delhi ***PHOTO: PTI***

As services like bookings, check-in and boarding moved to manual mode, taking longer 40 minutes longer than the expected time and leading to long queues at airports, passengers, including those who were travelling due to some emergency reasons, were seen complaining about the lack of information about their flights and venting out ire on airline staff.

The web check-in feature, which remained temporarily unavailable for passengers across airports, led to further chaos. Over 56 flights were cancelled out of 3,652 flights scheduled from Indian destinations. The impact was more on passengers flying out of high-density airports like Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru. Hyderabad's Airport saw as many as 23 flights -- 12 departures and 11 arrivals -- including IndiGo's flights to Visakhapatnam, Tirupati, Ahmedabad and Bengaluru being cancelled. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3, 5, 6 & 7

Countries hit

India, US, UK, Europe, Ukraine, Dubai, New Zealand, South Africa, Australia, Germany, Israel, Hong Kong, Czech Republic, South Korea, Taiwan.

Countries not affected

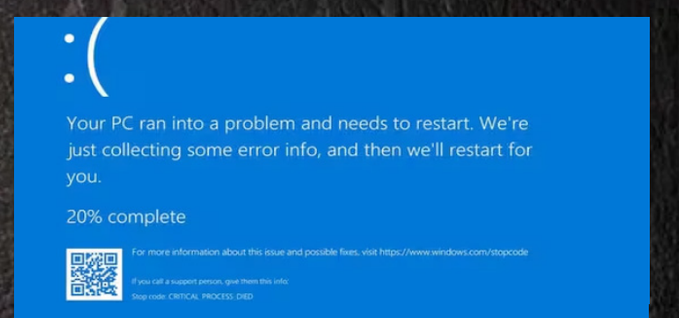
China escaped the outage as they have replaced foreign hardwares & softwares with domestic ones. Moscow's measures against Western sanctions helped Russia go unaffected.

What did Microsoft say?

The tech firm lost $23 billion in market value. A spokesperson said, "We anticipate a resolution is forthcoming. The issue is due to an update from a third-party software platform. This is not a cyberattack."

Microsoft hacked in Jan

In Jan, Russian group Midnight Blizzard hacked into Microsoft's corporate email accounts and gained access to its core software system.


:(
Your PC ran into a problem and needs to restart. We're just collecting some error info, and then we'll restart for you.
20% complete
For more information about this issue and possible fixes, visit https://www.windows.com/stopcode
If you call a support person, give them this info:
Stop code: CRITICAL_PROCESS_DIED

What is blue screen of death?

The blue screen of death appears when Windows sees a serious problem and has to shut down or restart to prevent any damage. Owing to this, millions of Windows computers began experiencing a "bootloop"—computer starting up and shutting down at random.

4,200 flights cancelled worldwide

What was affected in India?

200 flights including Akasa, IndiGo, Air India, Vistara, SpiceJet

Airports: Bengaluru, Delhi, Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh, Vijayawada, Andhra, Raipur, Patna, Chennai, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Jaipur

Banks: 10 banks including ICICI, Bank of India, HDFC

Apps: Instagram, Amazon, Gmail

"Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology is in touch with Microsoft and its associates regarding the global outage... National Informatics Centre network is not affected"
-Ashwini Vaishnaw, IT Minister

MS bug bugs the world

A massive Microsoft outage disrupted businesses in multiple countries, throwing airports, airlines, railways, government services, banks, stock exchanges, telecoms, health systems and media. CrowdStrike's anti-cyberattack software, which is integrated into Microsoft's Windows operating system, contained a bug that caused disruptions. This stemmed from an update to the software. CrowdStrike is a Texas-based cybersecurity firm founded in 2011. The firm said it was not a cyberattack, but they lost $12B in market. Earlier, Crowdstrike investigated 2014 cyberattack on Sony Pictures & on Democratic National Committee in 2016.

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Investors poorer by ₹7.94L cr as mkt falls

NEW DELHI, 19 JULY

Investors' wealth diminished by Rs 7.94 lakh crore on Friday as markets tumbled after a record-breaking rally.

The 30-share BSE Sensex tanked 738.81 points or 0.91 per cent to settle at 80,604.65 after hitting a fresh all-time high of 81,587.76 in initial trade.

Tracking the bearish trend in equities, the market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms eroded by Rs 7,94,059.53 crore to Rs 4,46,38,826.75 crore (USD 5.34 trillion).

In the past four days, the BSE benchmark had rallied 1,446.12 points or 1.80 per cent. The benchmark hit lifetime high levels for the fifth straight session till Friday.

"The domestic market closed on Friday with a downturn due to the global sell-off, triggered by operating system issues that caused devices to crash worldwide.

Among the Sensex pack, Tata Steel tumbled over 5 per cent while JSW Steel tanked more than 4 per cent. NTPC, Tata Motors, UltraTech Cement, Tech Mahindra, Power Grid, Mahindra & Mahindra, Bajaj Finance and Reliance Industries were the other major laggards.

Infosys climbed nearly 2 per cent after the IT major reported a 7 per cent rise in consolidated net profit at Rs 6,368 crore in the April-June quarter and raised its growth outlook for the current financial year, signalling an improvement in the IT segment. *—PTI*

AMID LEAK ROW

SC seeks Centre's reply on NEET-SS exam

NEW DELHI, 19 JULY

The Supreme Court on Friday sought responses from the Centre and others on a plea challenging a decision of the National Medical Commission (NMC) to not conduct National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test-Super Speciality (NEET-SS) examination in 2024.

A bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra was told by a lawyer, appearing for 13 aspirants that the NMC has decided to not hold the exam this year. As per news reports, NEET-SS is likely to be conducted in January, 2025.

While issuing notices to the Centre, Medical Counselling Committee and the NMC, the bench also gave liberty to petitioners Rahul Balwan and 12 others to make NBE (National Board of Examinations) a party to the petition and listed it for hearing on 26 July.

PHOTO: PTI

- NEET-SS can be taken by doctors having post-graduate degrees like MD, MS, and DNB.

Referring to an earlier judgement, the petitioners said NEET-SS has to be held every year and, moreover, the time schedule has already been fixed by the top court for admission to super-speciality courses.

The lawyer said the decision to postpone the exam this year apparently stemmed from the fact that there were delayed admissions to medical courses earlier due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The NEET-SS can be taken by doctors having post-graduate degrees like MD, MS, and DNB, or an equivalent qualification for admission to super-speciality courses. *—PTI*

BBMP SAYS CREATE REELS ON DENGUE, WIN CASH PRIZE

BENGALURU, 19 JULY

Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has announced a new initiative to raise awareness on dengue through reels via social media, on Friday.

The rewards include Rs 25,000 each for the first five best reels, Rs 10,000 each for five students, Rs 1 lakh for the school that makes reels with the most students, Rs 35,000 for teachers who encourage children to make videos to create awareness. BBMP will give the title of "Dengue Warrior" to everyone who shares the reels. While the intention to raise awareness is appreciated, many believe that BBMP should focus more on cleanliness in the City *—Salar News*

Bengaluru records coldest day of 2024

BENGALURU, 19 JULY

Bengaluru City experienced its coldest day of the year on Friday, with the City's Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) observatory recording a maximum temperature of 23.8°C, which is 4.5°C below the normal. This marks the 11th lowest maximum temperature ever recorded for July in the City's history. The minimum temperature recorded on Friday is 20.2°C. This significant drop in maximum temperature contrasts with the sweltering heat the City experienced earlier in the year. *—PTI*

DEBARRED FROM EXAM

UPSC cancels Khedkar's training, files FIR

NEW DELHI, 19 JULY

The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) on Friday lodged a criminal case against probationary IAS officer Puja Khedkar for faking her identity to fraudulently avail attempts in the civil services examination beyond eligibility, and taken steps to debar her from future selections.

The UPSC has, therefore, initiated a series of actions against her, including criminal prosecution by filing an FIR with the police authorities and has issued "a show cause notice for cancellation of her candidature of the Civil Services Examination-2022/ debarment from future examinations/ selections, in accordance with the Rules of the Civil Services Examination-2022", Delhi Police said.

Puja Khedkar ***PHOTO: PTI***

- A sessions court here has granted interim protection from arrest till 25 July to Dilip Khedkar accused of threatening a person with a gun over a land dispute.

Khedkar, a 2023-batch probationary Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer, is accused of misusing power and privileges, by demanding perks and facilities she was not entitled for, during her training in Pune District Collectorate in Maharashtra recently.

Meanwhile, a sessions court here has granted interim protection from arrest till 25 July to Dilip Khedkar, father of controversial probationary IAS officer Puja Khedkar, in a case where he is accused of threatening a person with a gun over a land dispute.

Pune Rural police on Thursday arrested Manorama Khedkar, his wife and Puja's mother, in the same case. Manorama was remanded in police custody till 20 July. Dilip Khedkar has moved the court seeking pre-arrest (`anticipatory') bail. *—PTI*

State to give ₹25L for dead Valmiki staff's kin

BENGALURU, 19 JULY

Karnataka government has announced a compensation of Rs 25 lakh to the family of Superintendent Chandrasekharan, who died in connection with Valmiki Corporation scam. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah stated that this compensation will facilitate the education of the officer's children, with an official announcement to be made in the legislative session.

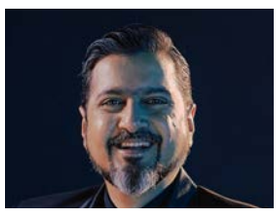
Addressing a press conference at Vidhana Soudha, Siddaramaiah accused the Opposition of attempting to defame the government by exploiting Dalit issues for sympathy. He said, "The government's commitment is for pro-Dalit and pro-backward guarantee schemes. Chandrasekaran, who belonged to tBhovi community in Tamil Nadu committed suicide on 26 May. In his suicide note, he blamed Valmiki Nigam MD Padmanabha, Chief Account Officer Parashuram, and Union Bank Chief Manager Suchismita on MG Road for his death. His wife Kavitha found the note and lodged a complaint on 27 May, leading to an FIR and subsequent court proceedings.

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar also clarified that his name was not associated with the Valmiki Development Corporation. *—Salar News*

11 Indira Canteens closed over ₹65 cr dues reopen

BENGALURU, 19 JULY

Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) said that 11 Indira Canteens in the southern zone, which were previously closed, resumed their operations on Friday. This decision follows media reports about the suspension of these canteens due to non-payment of bills. The canteens were suspended due to outstanding bills of approximately Rs 65 crore submitted by the contractor for water and electricity. The BBMP, however, contested these bills. Chef Talk, the company contracted for a year to supply food to the canteens, claimed that BBMP had failed to pay them. Chef Talk said that despite multiple requests to settle the bills, BBMP has not paid, leading to a halt of meal services. BBMP claimed that payments were based on their reports since November 2021. Discrepancies were found when the contractor allegedly submitted bills exceeding the food provided, leading to deductions in their grants. BBMP Commissioner Tushar Girinath refuted the contractor's claims entirely. He pointed out that attendance figures maintained by BBMP marshals did not align with those provided by the contractor. "We have 198 wards, and 184 canteens are functioning. One contractor has approached the court claiming a pending payment of Rs 65 crore, which we are contesting because their attendance records do not match ours," Girinath stated. ***—Salar News***



Grammy winner Kej sings KIA's official anthem

BENGALURU, 19 JULY

When three-time Grammy Award winner Lonnie Park got to know that fellow Grammy Award winner Ricky Kej was composing an anthem for Bengaluru airport, he volunteered to sing it for free, said Kej at the launch of the 'Airport Anthem' at the Terminal 1 of the Kempegowda International Airport on 19 July. The Kannada version of the bilingual song was sung by Siddhartha Belmannu. At the launch event Kej talked about how being a frequent flyer, airports play an important role in his life. "Kempegowda airport is particularly like a second home to me, as I am based out of Bengaluru. So, I thought why not make a song about the airport. The song is inspired by the beauty of the airport and all the memories I have built in this airport," said Kej. He recalled one such memory, which he described as the most unforgettable incident of his life. ***—PTI***

Chaos, manual check-ins: Microsoft outage affects KIA

A total of 53 domestic flights cancelled & over 55 delayed

BENGALURU, 19 JULY

Indigo, Air India Express, SpiceJet and Akasa at Bengaluru airport began checking in passengers manually on Friday, issuing handwritten boarding passes, after a global Microsoft outage led to the Navitaire Departure Control System stalling.

Passengers at the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) in Bengaluru had a harrowing time following the disruption in flight services and were seen anxiously waiting for their delayed flights. The lounge of the KIA was overcrowded due to the disruption in flight services.

"A global outage with the Navitaire Departure Control System (NDCS) has been affecting operations of some airlines across their network, including BLR Airport since 10.40am on 19 July, 2024," a Bangalore International Airport Limited spokesperson said in a statement.

Stranded passengers at the Kempegowda International Airport Bengaluru amid Microsoft outage, in Bengaluru, on Friday ***PHOTO: PTI***

Indigo, Akasa, and SpiceJet in Terminal-1 and Air India Express in Terminal-2 are among the affected airlines, BIAL said. IndiGo cancelled around 26 outbound flights from Bengaluru due to the Microsoft Outage on Friday.

"In response to this situation, Indigo, Air India Express, SpiceJet and Akasa have taken proactive measures by initiating manual check-ins to ensure minimal disruption to passengers and flight schedules," the spokesperson said. *—PTI*

₹777.54 cr relief for rain-hit areas in State

BENGALURU, 19 JULY

The State government announced the release of Rs 777.54 crore in relief funds for the districts severely impacted by heavy rains on Friday.

Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda in the Assembly said that the State will discuss compensation for the damage caused by damage in an upcoming Cabinet meeting.

He said that from 1 -19 July there has been 244 mm of rain in the State, which is the highest in 30-40 years, adding, in Malnad districts it is 544 mm and in coastal region 1,154 mm.

Noting that five platoons of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) have been deployed in six coastal and Malnad regions districts, the Minister said they will be stationed for the entire monsoon season.

The government has identified gram panchayats that are vulnerable to floods, he said. 2,225 villages are mapped as vulnerable ones, under 1,247-gram panchayats, with 2,38,000 people.

Over 1,200 gram panchayats have formed task forces to manage the relief efforts; each gram panchayat now has a taluk-level officer appointed as the nodal officer for flood management.

Meanwhile, the Legislative Assembly witnessed a ruckus over the alleged financial irregularities in a state-run corporation, with opposition BJP and JD(S) protest against the government, accusing it of "loot" and demanding resignation of Siddaramaiah.

—Salar News with Agencies

Minister Krishna Byre Gowda said that the State will discuss compensation for the damage in upcoming Cabinet meeting ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD***

Rs 300 cr illegally transferred during BJP's tenure, says DKS

Bengaluru, 19 July

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar accused BJP saying that it is the father of corruption, while addressing the media near Vidhana Soudha, on Friday. "During Yeddyurappa's and Bommai's time, more than Rs 300 crore from several corporations were illegally transferred. We will inform the people through the House," Shivakumar said. *—Salar News*

K'TAKA GOVT TABLES 3 BILLS IN ASSEMBLY

BENGALURU, 19 JULY

Karnataka government tabled three bills, including Karnataka Legislature (Prevention of Disqualification) (Second Amendment) Bill in the assembly, which pertains to preventing the disqualification of political secretaries who are MLAs or MLCs, on Friday.

The bill has been introduced to exempt CM Siddaramaiah's political secretary, financial advisor, policy and planning advisor and the deputy chairperson to Karnataka State Policy and Planning Commission from being disqualified for being a member of assembly on appointment.

Karnataka Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill aims to create a clear distinction between the input service distribution transactions requiring the transfer of input tax credit. The objective of Karnataka Cine and Cultural Activists (Welfare) Bill is to constitute a welfare board and to establish a fund for financial schemes *—PTI*

Haveri: 3 killed in roof collapse

HAVERI, 19 JULY

Three members of a family, including two kids, were killed and three others injured after roof of their house collapsed following heavy rains at Madapura village in Savanur taluk on Friday morning.

The deceased were Chennamma, 38, and two-year-old twin sisters -- Anushree and Amulya.

According to police, Muttappa Harakuni, 35, his wife Sunita, 30, and mother Yallamma, 70, the twin daughters and sister Chennamma were living in the 'kutcha' house in the village.

Meanwhile, search operations are continuing in Shirur village in Uttara Kannada to trace three people, including a lorry driver from Kerala, who are missing after a massive landslide.

One more body was recovered on Friday, taking the toll in the 16 July landslide to seven.

When asked about the missing lorry driver from Kerala -- Arjun from Kozhikode, Deputy Commissioner of Uttara Kannada Lakshmi Priya K said, "We are unable to locate the lorry yet both inside the river as well as on the landslide site; it is not seen yet. We are doing the restoration work.". *—PTI*

People walk in the rain in Bengaluru on Friday ***PHOTO: SALAR***

JOB RESERVATION

Kannada activists protest against owners of private firms who are opposing job reservation for Kannadigas on Friday ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD***

Kannada groups protest, urge all to boycott IT honchos

BENGALURU, 19 JULY

Protests erupted in Bengaluru on Thursday as Kannada rights groups voiced their outrage over the State government's decision to withdraw the Karnataka Job Reservation Act. The Act, which proposed reserving 50 per cent of management positions and 75 per cent of non-management positions in private companies for Kannadigas, was met with fierce opposition from industry leaders.

The pro-Kannada organisations protested near Mysuru Bank Circle.

The protests intensified after PhonePe CEO Sameer Nigam publicly criticised the bill on social media. Nigam's remarks, deemed insensitive by many Kannadigas, sparked a "#BoycottPhonePe" campaign with users uninstalling the app in protest. Filmmaker Santhosh Anandram joined the movement, urging others to follow suit.

Protesters at Mysore Bank Circle demanded the government reinstate the bill and resist pressure from corporations. Karave Praveen Shetty faction threatened state-wide protests and boycotts of companies such as Biocon and Manipal Group, accusing their owners Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw and Mohandas Pai of exploiting Karnataka's resources while opposing job opportunities for Kannadigas.

—Salar News

Tharoor terms quota bill as 'unconstitutional' & 'unwise'

PHOTO: PTI

Congress Working Committee member and Lok Sabha MP Shashi Tharoor on Friday criticised his party-ruled Karnataka's bill mandating job reservations for Kannadigas in the private sector, describing it as "unconstitutional" and "unwise". He, however, expressed happiness over the Siddaramaiah-led government's decision to withhold the bill. "That was not a wise decision. If every state brings such a law, it would be unconstitutional," Tharoor told reporters, reacting to a query. He said Supreme Court had rejected a similar bill when a government in Haryana tried to introduce it. "I don't know why State thought of it," he said, adding that businesses from the state would be relocated to states like Tamil Nadu and Kerala if such a law were enforced. *—PTI*

Govt launches programme to support entrepreneurs

BENGALURU, 19 JULY

The State government on Friday announced the launch of the Rajiv Gandhi Entrepreneurship Programme (RGEP), which is aimed at cultivating innovation and fostering entrepreneurship among young and talented graduates.

The initiative by the Department of Electronics, IT and Biotechnology signifies a strategic shift from traditional job-seeking to entrepreneurship, offering viable career options, stimulating job creation, and promoting technological advancements.

By doing so, RGEP aims to drive innovation-led economic growth within Karnataka, officials said.

According to an official statement, RGEP is set to support 30 innovators by providing a monthly stipend/subsistence grant of Rs 25,000 for a duration of 12 months. This financial support is intended to help these innovators navigate the uncertainties of the ideation phase.

"Innovators participating in RGEP will be required to collaborate with designated K-Tech partners (Centres of Excellence, TBIs and Innovation Hubs). These hubs will closely monitor the progress of each innovator throughout the 12-month programme, ensuring support and guidance during their entrepreneurial journey," it stated. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PIXABAY

NODAL OFFICIALS TO CHECK DENGUE CASES IN CITY

BENGALURU, 19 JULY

Amid a spike in dengue cases in the State, the Health department on Friday appointed nodal officers in all government hospitals across the City for effective management of the vector-borne disease.

A toll free helpline number -- 1800-425-8330 --- was set up for people to seek information or register complaints regarding dengue related issues, officials said.

These dedicated nodal officers will ensure better patient care, quicker response times and effective management of dengue cases.

"Under the Health and Family Welfare department, we have six hospitals across the City and one nodal officer has been appointed in each of them to address dengue-related issues. They can also lodge complaints in case of any dengue-related violation or request for a bed for patients suffering from the vector-borne disease," a senior health official said.

To ensure effective management of moderate and severe cases of dengue, the Health department had issued an order directing key government hospitals in the City to reserve a specific number of beds for dengue patients.

Dengue cases in the State crossed the 10,000 mark so far this year, taking the cumulative positive cases to 11,451 from 1 January 1 to 18 July. The vector-borne disease has claimed the lives of eight people in State this year. *—PTI*

54 LOCATIONS SEARCHED

Lokayukta raids 12 officials including M'luru Municipal Commissioner

BENGALURU, 19 JULY

Mangaluru City Municipal Commissioner CL Anand was among the 12 government officials raided by Lokayukta sleuths on Friday in connection with disproportionate assets cases, a Lokayukta official said.

Anand is a senior grade Karnataka Administrative Services (KAS) officer, who was posted as Mangaluru City Corporation Commissioner in June, 2023.

The government had transferred him on 4 July after which he appealed to the State government against it. On 9 July, his transfer was cancelled.

Apart from Anand, premises of Hebbagodi City Municipal Council Commissioner in Bengaluru Rural and KAS officer K Narasimha Murthy were raided by Lokayukta sleuths.

- According to the official, the raids were carried out in Bengaluru, Tumakuru, Shivamogga, Yadgiri and Kalaburagi

The Additional Director in the Industries and Commerce Department CT Muddu Kumar, who is on deputation as the Chief Operating Officer in the Invest Karnataka Forum, too was the target of Lokayukta sleuths.

Yadgir Zilla Panchayat Project Director Balavant Rathod, Senior Veterinary Officer in Bengaluru Rural district R Siddappa, Commercial Taxes Joint Commissioner Ramesh Kumar, Legal Metrology Deputy Controller Athar Ali, Antargange Gram Panchayat president Nagesh B Gowda in Bhadravati Taluk of Shivamogga district, Horticulture Department Deputy Director Prakash and Mandya Labour Officer Chetan Kumar were among those raided on Friday.

According to the official, the raids were carried out in Bengaluru, Tumakuru, Shivamogga, Yadgiri and Kalaburagi.

"Officials commenced the raid early this morning at 54 locations involving over 100 sleuths," the official said. *—PTI*

CL Anand (inset) is a senior grade KAS officer ***PHOTO: PTI***

OFFICERS RAIDED BY LOKAYUKTA

Sl. No.	Officers raided	Assets recovered in Rs crore
1.	**Anand CL,** M'luru KAS Senior Scale Commissioner	2.77
2.	**Chethan Kumar,** Mysuru Division Labour Officer	5.38
3.	**BV Raja,** FDA, B'luru Land Acquisition office	5.51
4.	**Ramesh Kumar,** B'luru Jt Commissioner Commercial Tax	4.08
5.	**Athar Ali,** B'luru Division Dy Controller, Legal Metrology Dept	8.63
6.	**Manjunath TR,** FDA, B'luru Revenue Department	2.68
7.	**K Narasimhamurthy,** KMAS, Hebbagodi Commissioner	4.45
8.	**Siddappa,** Doddaballapura Veterinary Inspector	2.93
9.	**Prakash GN,** Dy Director, Shivamogga Horticulture Dept	2.07
10.	**Nagesh,** President, Shivamogga Antaragange Grama Panchayath	2.19
11.	**CT Muddukumar,** Addl. Director, B'luru OOD Chief Operation Officer	7.41
12.	**Balavant Rathod,** Yadagiri Project Director, Zilla Panchayath	1.69

CBI grills Ranchi MBBS student in NEET paper leak

RANCHI, 19 JULY

Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is questioning a first-year MBBS student from the 2023 batch of RIMS in connection with the NEET-UG paper leak case, an official said on Friday. The student, who stays at the girls' hostel of Rajendra Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS), formerly known as Rajendra Medical College and Hospital (RMCH), an autonomous institute under the Jharkhand government, was approached by the CBI earlier this week for questioning. The official said parents of the student had contacted the management and were briefed about the situation. On the same day in neighbouring Bihar, the CBI arrested four MBBS students of AIIMS Patna as part of their investigation into the paper leak case. The agency, which is probing the alleged irregularities in the medical entrance exam, has lodged six FIRs so far. *—PTI*

Vinay Kwatra appointed as envoy to US

NEW DELHI, 19 JULY

G Former Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra was on Friday appointed as India's ambassador to the United States. "He is expected to take up the assignment shortly," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said. The post of India's envoy to the US has been lying vacant since Taranjit Sandhu retired in January. Kwatra served as the foreign secretary from 1 May, 2022, to 14 July, 2024. Kwatra joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1988 and served in India's Permanent Mission in Geneva in the initial years of his service. Between 1993 and 2003, he served as a desk officer at the external affairs ministry's headquarters in Delhi dealing with the United Nations, and subsequently in the diplomatic missions in South Africa and Uzbekistan. From 2003 to 2006, he served as the counsellor and later as the deputy chief of mission at the Indian embassy in Beijing. *—PTI*

Man held for threatening to bomb UP CM

PRAYAGRAJ, 19 JULY

A man who had threatened to bomb Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on social media a few days ago has been detained here, police said on Friday. The accused has been identified as Anirudh Pandey, a first-year law student and resident of the Sarai Inayat police station area, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Ganganagar) Abhishek Bharti said. According to DCP Bharti, Pandey confessed during interrogation that he had posted the threat on microblogging platform X to garner fame and got the idea from Youtube videos. The police and surveillance team took immediate action following Pandey's identification and he was detained on Wednesday night under Section 170 of the Bharatiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita, the officer said. *—PTI*

YSRCP cadres not safe in AP: Jagan pens letter to PM

AMARAVATI, 19 JULY

Former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and Opposition YSRCP leader YS Jagan Mohan Reddy wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, complaining about the alleged atrocities against his party cadres by the ruling TDP and its allies. In just one month, Reddy alleged that 31 people were murdered, 35 people committed suicide, 560 private and 490 government properties were destroyed and 2,700 people were forced to flee their villages. Additionally, there have been over 1,050 incidents of violence and attacks. This reflects the state of affairs in our state under the present dispensation, which is not at all inclined to maintain law and order, Reddy said in the letter, shared in the intervening night of Thursday and Friday. The letter comes in the wake of the murder of a YSRCP activist, Sheikh Rashid, in Vinukonda. *—PTI*

Centre lists 6 new Bills for Parl's upcoming session

Government to replace the Aircraft Act of 1934

NEW DELHI, 19 JULY

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is scheduled to present the Union Budget on 23 July **PHOTO: PTI**

The Centre has listed six new bills for introduction, including the one which seeks to replace the 90-year-old Aircraft Act, to provide enabling provisions for ease of doing business in the aviation sector, in the upcoming Parliament session beginning Monday.

Besides the Finance Bill, the government has also listed 'The Disaster Management (Amendment) Bill' for introduction, consideration and passing. The proposed legislation aims to bring more clarity and convergence in the roles of different organisations working in the field of disaster management, a Lok Sabha bulletin issued Thursday said.

The Bhartiya Vayuyan Vidheyak, 2024 seeks to replace the Aircraft Act of 1934 to provide enabling provisions for ease of doing business in the civil aviation sector.

The session beginning 22 July will conclude on 12 August. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is scheduled to present the Union Budget on 23 July.

Other bills listed for introduction and passage during the session are the Boilers Bill to replace the pre-Independence era law, the Coffee (Promotion and Development) Bill and the Rubber (Promotion and Development) Bill.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla has also constituted the Business Advisory Committee (BAC), which decides the parliamentary agenda.

The committee chaired by the Speaker has Sudip Bandyopadhyay (TMC), P P Chaudhary (BJP), Lavu Sri Krishna Devarayalu (TDP), Nishikant Dubey (BJP), Gaurav Gogoi (Congress), Sanjay Jaiswal (BJP), Dileshwar Kamait (JD-U), Bhartruhari Mahtab (BJP), Dayanidhi Maran (DMK), Baijayant Panda (BJP), Arvind Sawant (Shiv Sena-UBT), Kodikunnil Suresh (Congress), Anurag Thakur (BJP) and Lalji Verma (SP) as members. *—PTI*

AFTER DMK'S APPEAL

Madras HC issues notice to Centre on 3 criminal laws

CHENNAI, 19 JULY

PHOTO: PTI

The Madras High Court on Friday issued notice to the Centre over a plea by the DMK to declare as ultra vires and unconstitutional, the three new criminal laws brought in by the Union government.

The three laws-- Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam have come into effect from 1 July. They have replaced the Indian Penal Code, The Code of Criminal Procedure Code and the Indian Evidence Act.

A division bench comprising Justices SS Sundar and N Senthil Kumar before whom the petition filed by DMK Organising Secretary RS Bharathi came up for hearing, issued notice to the Centre and gave it four weeks time to respond.

According to the petitioner, the government introduced the three Bills and got them passed by the Parliament without any meaningful discussion.

In the absence of any substantive changes, mere shuffling of sections was unnecessary and will cause a lot of inconvenience and confusion regarding the interpretation of the provisions, he added.

He said shuffling of sections will make it very difficult for the judges, advocates, the law enforcing authorities and the general public to correlate the new provisions with the old ones to search for precedents.

It seems the exercise was being done only to "Sanskritise" the titles of the Acts without any devotion to revisit the laws, he contended. *—PTI*

Atishi demands ₹10K cr from Centre for Delhi

NEW DELHI, 19 JULY

Delhi Finance Minister Atishi **PHOTO: PTI**

Delhi Finance Minister Atishi on Friday demanded Rs 10,000 crore from the Centre for infrastructure development, claiming the city government got nothing in return over the past year despite its income tax contribution of Rs 2 lakh crore.

Delhi also provided Rs 25,000 crore as central GST to the pool of taxes, the minister said during a press conference here.

Ahead of the presentation of the Centre's annual budget, Atishi batted for release of more money to Delhi, saying it could be spent on infrastructure development in road, transport and power sectors as well as to beautify the city.

Asserting that people of Delhi are the highest income tax payers, the minister said, "Delhi should get Rs 10,000 crore from the Rs 2.07 lakh crores that people of the city pay as income tax. This amount of Rs 10,000 crore is just 0.25 per cent of the Central government's budget and only 5 per cent of the income tax of Delhiites."

The Monsoon Session of Parliament will begin from 22 July. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is scheduled to present the Union Budget on 23 July. *—PTI*

WB ASSAULT CASE

SC to examine provision granting immunity to guvs

NEW DELHI, 19 JULY

PHOTO: PTI

The Supreme Court on Friday agreed to examine the contours of Article 361 of the Constitution which grants "blanket immunity" to governors from any kind of criminal prosecution.

A bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud also issued a notice to the West Bengal government on a plea of a contractual woman employee, who has alleged molestation by state Governor CV Ananda Bose.

She sought judicial scrutiny of Article 361 of the Constitution granting "immunity" to the governor.

The top court sought the assistance of Attorney General R Venkataramani in dealing with the issue.

It asked the woman employee of West Bengal 'Raj Bhavan' to also make the Centre a party to her plea.

The article is an exception to Article 14 (right to equality) of the Constitution and provides that the president or the governor is not answerable to any court for the exercise of the powers and duties of his office.

The woman petitioner has sought directions to frame specific guidelines under which governors enjoy immunity from criminal prosecution.

Senior advocate Shyam Divan, appearing for the petitioner, said that Article 361 of the Constitution cannot be a bar against investigation.

The petition has asked the apex court to decide "whether sexual harassment and molestation form part of discharging or performing duties by the Governor", so as to grant him a blanket immunity under Article 361 of the Constitution. *—PTI*

Electoral Bonds: SC to hear pleas on SIT probe on 22 July

NEW DELHI, 19 JULY

The Supreme Court on Friday said that it will hear petitions seeking a probe by a SIT into the alleged instances of quid pro quo arrangements between corporates and political parties through Electoral Bonds donations.

A bench of Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra said it would hear the matter on 22 July. The petition filed by NGOs Common Cause and the Centre for Public Interest Litigation had sought direction to the authorities to investigate the source of funding of shell companies and loss-making companies to various political parties, as has been disclosed through the electoral bond data. *—ANI*

Assam to become Muslim majority state by 2041: Himanta

GUWAHATI, 19 JULY

Himanta Biswa Sarma **PHOTO: PTI**

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Friday claimed that the Muslim population in his state is growing around 30 per cent every 10 years, and they will become the majority by 2041.

Addressing a press conference here, he said Muslims have now become 40 per cent of Assam's population as per "statistical sampling".

"In 2011, 1.4 crore Muslims were there in Assam. By 2041, Assam will become a Muslim-majority state. It's a reality and nobody can stop it," Sarma asserted.

According to the 2011 census, Assam had a total Muslim population of 1.07 crore, making up 34.22 per cent of the total 3.12 crore residents. There were 1.92 crore Hindus in the state, around 61.47 per cent of the total population.

"In every 10 years, the Muslim population rises by 11 lakh in Assam... This is not Himanta Biswa Sarma's data, but Indian census data. These are all published data," the CM said.

Assam government has taken steps to reduce population growth among the Muslim community, he said. *—PTI*

'ATMANIRBHARTA CAN'T BE AT COST OF NATION'S DEFENCE'

MUMBAI, 19 JULY

Vice Chief of the Air Staff (VCAS), Air Marshal AP Singh, on Friday said 'Atmanirbharata' is "not just a buzzword", it is something that all stakeholders need to put their heart and soul into, even as he underlined that this 'Atmanirbharta' cannot be at the cost of nation's defence.

In his address at a CAPS seminar here, he asserted that "nation's defence comes first and foremost".

The VCAS said defending a nation is "everybody's job and not just the job of persons in uniform".

Pitching for 'Atmanirbharta' in defence, he said the DRDO, private industries and others can bolster armed forces' capabilities in radars, communications and a plethora of other things.

'Atmanirbharata' is "not just a buzzword", it is something that all stakeholders need to put their heart and soul into, and make sure technologies and weapons are developed and manufactured in India, "so that we are not relying on an outside agency who could change its alliance or stop flow of weapons to our country" when the time comes, he said. *—PTI*

Ujjain BJP leader shot in front of cops

UJJAIN, 19 JULY

Bhartiya Janata Party's (BJP) Youth Leader of Madhya Pradesh, Prakash Yadav, was shot early Friday morning at 1am.

The accused, SP Bhadoria, a retired army man had a dispute with Prakash Yadav earlier that night in Hamukhedi, which falls under the Nagjhiri Police Station.

Superintendent of Police (SP) Pradeep Sharma stated that the police had arrived at Yadav's house to investigate an ongoing financial dispute between Prakash Yadav and SP Bhadoria. Shortly after the police arrived, Bhadoria arrived on his motorcycle with his licenced pistol and fired at Yadav in front of the policemen.

Sharma further added that the bullet hit Yadav on the right side of his chest. He is currently undergoing treatment at Sanjeevani Hospital, is out of danger. "The police had reached the spot and were trying to understand the situation at Prakash Yadav's house. SP Bhadoria arrived on his motorcycle and fired from his pistol, hitting Yadav on the right side of his chest," Sharma said. *—PTI*

Protesters shout slogans against the shortage of drinking water in Baramulla district on Friday **PHOTO: PTI**

Protests erupt in Baramulla over drinking water shortage

SRINAGAR, 19 JULY

- BJP said the vehicle was damaged and the PSOs of the two leaders were "seriously injured" in the attack and they were rushed to hospital

A clash broke out between police and some people who were protesting against the shortage of drinking water in Baramulla district on Friday, officials said. The personal security officers of BJP leaders were also injured when protesters resorted to stone pelting. The protest was held on the Srinagar-Baramulla highway in Mirgund locality of Pattan, they said.

According to authorities, a mob "attacked" BJP's Kashmir media in-charge Sajid Yousuf Shah and the party's social media in-charge Sahil Bashir Bhat, who were passing through the area in their car.

BJP said the vehicle was damaged and the PSOs of the two leaders were "seriously injured" in the attack and they were rushed to hospital. *—ANI*

AMID BACKLASH

Kanwar Yatra order now extends across UP, U'khand

LUCKNOW, 19 JULY

BJP justified the move, saying it will help the Shiva devotees choose where they want to eat **PHOTO: PTI**

Days after Muzaffarnagar Police asked all eateries along the Kanwar Yatra route to display their owners' names, the Uttar Pradesh government is extending the controversial order across the state and Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said similar instructions are already in place there.

The order issued by the Muzaffarnagar police earlier this week for the duration of the yatra has been slammed by opposition parties and some members of the ruling alliance, who say it targets Muslim traders.

An Uttar Pradesh government Spokesperson said Friday a formal order for all eateries along the Kanwar Yatra route in the state was likely to be issued soon.

In Dehradun, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said the decision was taken on 12 July at a meeting to review the preparations for the Kanwar Yatra.

As in Muzaffarnagar, hotels, dhabas and roadside eateries along the yatra route in Uttarakhand have been asked to display their owners' names, addresses and mobile phone numbers.

The Uttarakhand decision will mostly cover Haridwar but some 'kanwariyas' also visit Rishikesh, Neelkanth and Gangotri as part of the yatra from 22 July to 2 August.

Haridwar Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Pramendra Dobhal said strict action will be taken against violators. Verification of the staff working at the establishments has also been made mandatory, he said.

Muslim organisations react

Prominent Muslim organisation Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind on Friday condemned the order in Uttar Pradesh asking all eateries along the Kanwar Yatra route to display their owners' names, saying just as the Dalit community has been subjected to untouchability, there is a deliberate attempt to treat Muslims in a similar manner. Jamiat President Maulana Mahmood Madani said although this decision is being implemented in a specific area, its ramifications will be far-reaching.

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said similar instructions are already in place in his state as well. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

2 men arrested from Haryana for buying girl for ₹2L

JAIPUR, 19 JULY

Two men were arrested from Haryana on Friday for allegedly buying an 11-year-old girl from her aunt three years ago, police said on Friday. The arrested duo, Sandeep Yadav and Satveer Yadav, "bought" the girl for Rs 2 lakh from her aunt who is absconding, Murlipura SHO Sunil Kumar said. The teenager later became the mother of two children at the age of 12 and 14, Kumar said. The accused made an Aadhar card of the victim using false information, the police said. According to SHO Kumar, the girl managed to escape and lodge a complaint at the Murlipura police station here on Tuesday. Based on her complaint, a case was lodged under sections of Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO) and other relevant sections, the SHO said. *—PTI*

33,000L of smuggled diesel seized in Raigad

ALIBAG, 19 JULY

Police have seized 33,000 litres of diesel being smuggled into the country via sea route at Rewas port in Maharashtra's Raigad district, and arrested four persons in this connection, officials said on Friday. The seized diesel and the trawler in which it was brought is collectively worth Rs 36.40 lakh, they said. The arrested accused are Ganesh Koli, 40; Vinayak Koli, 45; Gajanan Koli, 45 and Mukesh Nishad, 45, all residents of Bodni Koliwada in Alibag taluka of the district, the police said. "The police had received a tip-off that diesel was being smuggled and brought to Rewas port in a trawler. Accordingly, police were deployed at the jetty. When the trawler arrived there, the police conducted a search and found 33,000 litres of diesel being brought illegally," an official said. *—PTI*

Nithari killings: SC to hear pleas by CBI, UP govt

NEW DELHI, 19 JULY

Supreme Court on Friday agreed to hear separate pleas filed by CBI and the Uttar Pradesh government challenging the Allahabad High Court's verdict acquitting Surendra Koli in the sensational 2006 Nithari serial killings case. A bench of Justices BR Gavai, KV Viswanathan, and N Kotiswar Singh issued a notice and sought a response from Koli on the petitions and tagged them with similar pleas which are already pending before the apex court. The top court on 8 July sought a response from Koli on separate pleas filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) against the high court's 16 October last year verdict. *—PTI*

HC nulls M'rashtra's nod to exempt pvt schools from RTE

MUMBAI, 19 JULY

Bombay High Court on Friday quashed a 9 February notification of the Maharashtra government that exempted private schools within a 1km radius of government or aided schools from Right to Education (RTE) Act quota admissions. A division bench of Chief Justice DK Upadhyaya and Justice Amit Borkar said the notification was "ultra vires" (beyond legal power) to Article 21 and the provisions of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, also known as the RTE. The bench, however, noted that before it had stayed the implementation of the notification in May, a few private unaided schools had admitted students. These admissions shall not be disturbed but the schools shall ensure that the 25 per cent quota for seats under the RTE, it said. *—PTI*

Roads flooded, rivers in spate as rains batter states

T'gana, Kerala, Mumbai MP, Assam, Arunachal & R'than hit

Kurung Kumey District Police navigate treacherous terrain to provide humanitarian service to villages affected by landslides and road cuts in Arunachal; A portion of road caves-in after rains, at Mansarovar in Jaipur *PHOTO: PTI*

HYDERABAD, 19 JULY

Extremely heavy overnight downpour battered several regions of Telangana on Friday, raising the possibility of flooding in districts where rains were concentrated.

The IMD has issued a red alert stating that heavy-to-very-heavy rain and extremely heavy rain are very likely to occur at isolated places in the districts of Karimnagar, Peddapalli, Jayashankar Bhupalpally, Mulugu and other districts of Telangana on Friday. Meanwhile, Disaster management personnel rescued about 40 people who were stranded in agricultural fields following flooding at a rivulet caused by a breach, and provided food for about 150 people at a relief camp in Bhadradri-Kothagudem of Telangana.

7 killed in MP

Nine-year-old boy was among seven people killed in lightning strikes in different parts of Madhya Pradesh in the last 24 hours, as intermittent showers lashed the state, an official said on Friday. IMD has warned of thunderstorms accompanied by lightning at many places in the state in the next 24 hours, the official said.

Kerala braces for more heavy rains

IMD said Kerala will receive heavy to very heavy rains in the next few days due to weather conditions and wind patterns prevailing over peninsular India. The IMD also issued an orange alert in the four northern Kerala districts of Kozhikode, Wayanad, Kannur and Kasaragod for the day and a yellow alert in five other districts. Heavy rains in the state, especially in the northern Malabar region, caused flooding, uprooting of trees, minor landslides and traffic snarls. In Wayanad, due to flooding of the Muthanga National Highway (NH 766), 25 vehicles with around 400 passengers were stranded there for several hours since midnight, the district administration said.

Mumbai comes to a standstill

Heavy downpours hit railway and bus services in Mumbai, causing inconvenience to lakhs of office-goers. Incessant rain with intermittent heavy spells led to waterlogging on some roads and railway tracks, slowing down the public transport services.

Assam flood situation remains grim

The flood situation in Assam improved on Friday, with water levels receding across the state, officials said.

According to a report by the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) on Thursday night, 2,72,037 people across 695 villages in 31 revenue circles of 13 districts are currently affected. *—PTI*

NIA arrests aide of Canada-based wanted Khalistani terrorist in MP

NEW DELHI, 19 JULY

The NIA has arrested a key aide of Canada-based Khalistani terrorist Lakhbir Singh Sandhu alias Landa in a major terror network case involving the supply of deadly weapons for extortion from businessmen among others, an official statement said on Friday.

Baljeet Singh alias Rana Bhai alias Balli, hailing from Barwani district of Madhya Pradesh, was arrested on Thursday, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) said in the statement.

Balli was found to be a major

NIA *PHOTO: PTI*

weapons supplier to Landa's agents in Punjab, it said.

The weapons were used to carry out large-scale terror activities, including extortions from businessmen and others, it said. NIA's investigations in the case had led to the arrest of one Gurpreet Singh Gopi, identified as an associate of Landa and of another Khalistani terrorist Satnam Singh Satta, the NIA said.

Investigations in the case, registered by NIA suo moto on 10 July, 2023, revealed that Baljeet Singh had also provided weapons to Satta as part of a larger conspiracy of various banned Khalistani terrorist organisations to destabilise India by unleashing violent acts in Punjab and other places. Both Landa and Satta are believed to be operating from Canada to promote terror in India, it said. *—PTI*

JINDAL STEEL CEO ACCUSED OF SEX HARASSMENT

NEW DELHI, 19 JULY

Jindal Steel and Power Chairman Naveen Jindal promised to investigate allegations of molestation against a CEO of his Group company levelled by a fellow passenger onboard a flight from Kolkata to Abu Dhabi, saying his group has zero-tolerance policy in such matters.

The industrialist made the remarks in reply to a post by the complainant on X.

The complainant has alleged that a CEO of a Jindal company started groping her onboard a flight from Kolkata to Abu Dhabi. *—PTI*

'ABSOLUTELY MISCONCEIVED'

SC junks plea of 2 Bilkis convicts eyeing remission

NEW DELHI, 19 JULY

Bilkis Bano *PHOTO: PTI*

Supreme Court on Friday refused to entertain a plea of two of the 11 convicts in the Bilkis Bano case challenging the 8 January verdict cancelling their remission.

A bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Sanjay Kumar termed the plea as "absolutely misconceived" and said how can it sit in appeal over an order passed by another bench of the apex court.

Advocate Rishi Malhotra appearing for convicts Radheyshaym Bhagwandas Shah and Rajubhai Babulal Soni sought permission to withdraw the plea.

n March, Bhagwandas and Babulal moved the court contending the January verdict contravened a 2002 order by the Constitution bench and asked that the issue - of their remission by the Gujarat government being cancelled - be referred to a larger bench.

They two different benches of the Supreme Court, both of same strength, had taken diametrically opposite views on the state government's policy of early release of prisoners.

According to the plea today, in May 2022 one bench directed the state to consider Bhagwandas' plea for early release. *—PTI*

Death toll in UP train accident now 4; 34 injured

GONDA, 19 JULY

The death toll in the Chandigarh-Dibrugarh Express derailment in Uttar Pradesh's Gonda has risen to four, while 31 people were injured in the incident, an official said on Friday.

Eight coaches of the train had derailed between Motiganj and Jhilahi railway stations, about 150km from the state capital, on the Gonda-Gorakhpur section of the Northeast Railway on Thursday afternoon.

District Magistrate of Gonda, Neha Sharma, said, "So far, four passengers have died and 31 are injured. Of the injured, the condition of around half a dozen is critical."

"The deceased include Rahul, 38, Saroj Kumar Singh, 31, and two unknown passengers. The body of one of the unknown passengers was retrieved on Friday morning," Sharma said.

A railway official said a high-level investigation has begun.

The railway technical team, which reached the spot late last night, collected samples from the accident site and took photographs. Meanwhile, the railway administration is trying to restore traffic by removing the damaged coaches from the track.

A railway official said the restoration work was carried out through the night using light from a generator. *—PTI*

A railway official said the restoration work was carried out through the night using light from a generator *PHOTO: PTI*

Anvi was not making reels: Influencers

Travel influencer Aanvi Kamdar died after falling into a crevice at Kumbhe Waterfall, Maharashtra, on Thursday. While media reports suggested that she fell while making a reel, her friends who were at the spot said the slippery waterfall was the cause. The reportage received massive backlash from other travel influencers, who say that it paints their profession in a bad light. Here is what some of the influencers had to say:

Sharanya Iyer, 'trulynomadly'
494k followers
" the narrative about this issue is all the same the influencer dies while making a reel... The vile comments, and disheartening messages from the mob on Aanvis Instagram state that the influencer deserved this as she has done this all for content."

Aakash Malhotra, 'wanderwithsky'
1.2M followers
"I refrain from engaging in media gossip that lacks factual support on the matter. At this time all you can do is support the family and friends of Aanvi."

Sanskriti Ramtek Kanzar, my.weekend.story
101k followers
"it makes me completely furious to say how media is portraying this story... if you want us to stop doing all these things please ban these places"

Aanvi Kamdar *PHOTO: INSTAGRAM*

No religious structure permitted on Yamuna floodplain, rules HC

NEW DELHI, 19 JULY

Delhi HC *PHOTO: PTI*

- The court stated that the appellant has no document to show its ownership over the site and the temple.

Yamuna floodplain, an eco-sensitive zone, has to be zealously protected from encroachment and no structure, religious or otherwise, can be permitted to stand there, Delhi High Court said.

The court said encroachments have to be necessarily removed, A division bench headed by Acting Chief Justice Manmohan refused to interfere with an order of a single judge allowing demolition of 'Prachin Shiv Mandir' -- which was built near the river in Geeta Colony area, noting that the appellant, 'Prachin Shiv Mandir Avam Akhada Samiti', did not have even a "single scrap of a document" to show any legitimacy.

Observing that the entire structure comprising the temple had already been demolished by the DDA, the court said even otherwise, nothing survived for further consideration. The appellant claimed that it was established as a society by a distinguished priest, renowned for founding 101 Shiv Lingas, and the temple stood on one of such revered Shiv Lingas.

It assailed the demolition order on the grounds that it received no formal notice from the authorities and the land belonged to the State of Uttar Pradesh and not the DDA. The appellant also alleged that no opportunity was granted by the Religious Committee before it recommended the demolition.

In its order, the court stated that the appellant has no document to show its ownership over the site where the temple was built and although the land belonged to the State of UP, the DDA was conferred with the task of removal of any type of encroachment from the land required as per an MoU. *—PTI*

Man, son shot dead over water dispute in Punjab

FEROZEPUR, 19 JULY

A man and his son were shot dead in Punjab's Fazilka district allegedly over a land dispute, police said on Friday.

An argument broke out between two groups in Pakka village on Thursday evening. During this, some people opened fire in which Avtar Singh, 55, and his son Harmeet Singh were shot and they died on the spot, they said.

Avtar's brother Karaj Singh claimed that his brother had leased about eight acres of land in Pakka village. This land was previously rented to Palwinder Singh, a resident of the same village.

Due to some dispute with the landowner, Palwinder Singh lost the lease which led to resentment on the latter's part, Karaj said.

"Yesterday evening when my brother along with his son Harmeet, went to the fields, Palwinder shut off the water supply to their fields and challenged that they should source water from elsewhere," Karaj said. *—PTI*

Avtar Singh and son Harmeet Singh *PHOTO: SCREENGRAB*

VIOLATION OF RIGHTS

Assam tribals say 3 killed in fake encounter

GUWAHATI, 19 JULY

Police personnel display the arms and ammunition recovered after an encounter with alleged Hmar terrorists, in Assam's Cachar *PHOTO: PTI*

Several Hmar community organisations have denounced the killing of three of its youths in an alleged encounter with Assam Police two days ago and urged the NHRC to take suo motu cognisance of these "extrajudicial" deaths.

Assam Hills Region of the Hmar Inpui, the community's apex body, termed the circumstances leading to death of the three Hmar youths as "a stark violation of human rights".

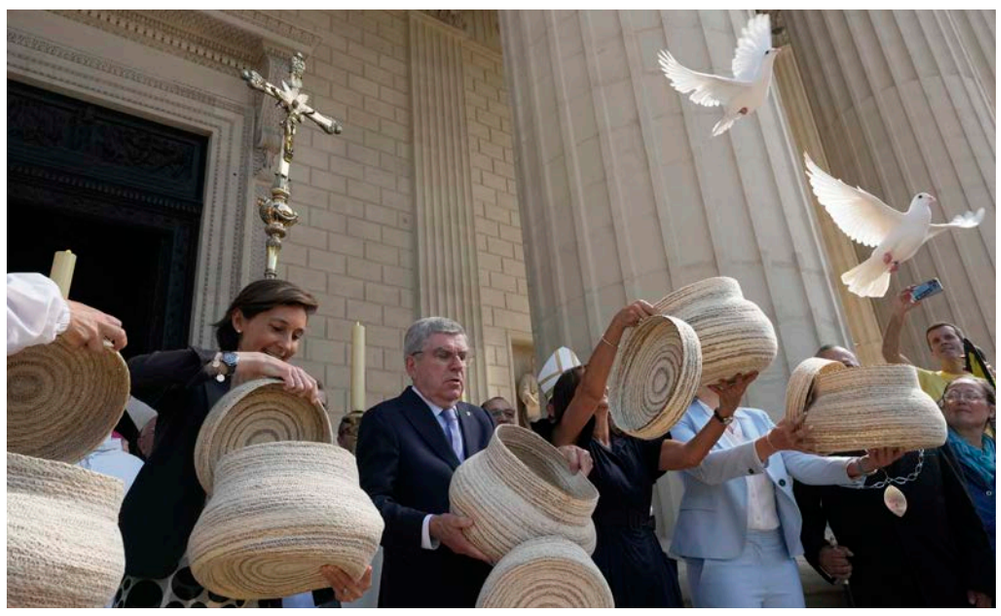
On 17 July, three suspected Hmar militants were killed and three police personnel injured in a fierce encounter in Assam's Cachar district, senior police officials had said. Two of them were from Cachar and one was from Churachandpur in Manipur.

The organisation's Assam Hills Region in its statement demanded that the state government immediately institute a special commission to conduct an impartial investigation into their deaths in light of the evidence recorded on video and the "inconsistency" reported in the social media outlets. "We also request the National Human Rights Commission to take suo motu cognisance of the deaths and notify the Assam government to institute a magisterial inquiry into the killings. The dastardly and cowardly attacks against minorities by the brutal police forces should be stopped immediately," it added.

The group said those involved in the alleged encounter should not go scot-free and be booked and punished as per the law.

"We also demand the Cachar Police to respect the right to live and should not covertly indulge in curbing the rights of minorities. We deeply mourn the loss of our three precious youths and stand in solidarity with the bereaved families," Hmar Inpui said.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma too had termed the three youths as militants. Assam DGP on Thursday backed his force and Mahatta on X while sharing the press note distributed by the Cachar SP, saying it may be taken as authentic note on behalf of Assam Police. *—PTI*



OLYMPIC TRUCE MASS

French Sports Olympic and Paralympic Games minister Amelie Oudea and International Olympic Committee President Thomas Bach, release doves after an Olympic truce mass at the Madaleine Church, in Paris, on Friday
PHOTO: PTI

Why & what caused the global IT outage?

A major IT outage has hit businesses across the world, grounding planes as well as affecting banks and the healthcare sector.

George Kurtz, CEO of IT security firm Crowdstrike, said it had traced the issue to a "defect found in a single content update" for the security software it provides for the Microsoft Windows operating system on computers.

Microsoft said the issue was caused by an 'update from a third-party software platform' and that the "underlying cause" had now been fixed.

The Conversation spoke to Professor Alan Woodward, an expert in cybersecurity at the University of Surrey, about what went wrong and how the problem could be resolved.

By far the bigger problem seems to be an update that appears to have been done on 18 July for [IT security company] Crowdstrike's Falcon product – a computer threat checker
PHOTO: ANI

Can you explain what's happened here?

I think there are two things. First, Microsoft seems to have had a problem with its Azure cloud computing platform. It's a bit unclear, but there was a degree of degradation in that service starting in the evening of 18 July. However, it didn't fail altogether.

But by far the bigger problem seems to be an update that appears to have been done in the late evening of 18 July for [IT security company] Crowdstrike's Falcon product – a computer threat checker. Falcon works by having some "agent" software deeply embedded in the operating system of every PC, which monitors that computer and "calls home" if there's a problem. It also receives updates on what to look out for if there's a threat. It's used a lot by large organisations throughout the world, which have a huge number of PCs to police.

I'm sure Crowdstrike are urgently investigating what happened. This piece of software is designed to protect people from ransomware attacks and the like. From the latest information I've seen, it looks like the update system file was somehow released in an incorrect format.

The Windows operating system gets to this update and it doesn't know how to cope, so it crashes. That's why people have been getting the "blue screen of death" [a computer screen with an error message indicating a system crash].

And the big problem is, you can't fix this issue remotely. You have to go into every machine separately and put it into "safe" or "recovery" mode to isolate the software. From there, you should be able to reboot the machine and get it up and running again. But if you're a big global company with a large distributed IT estate, that's going to take a long time.

Why has this outage had such wide-ranging effects?

Crowdstrike has been a great success – its security software is used by hundreds of thousands of major clients around the world. So airlines, airports, railways, hospitals, stock exchanges … they're all going down.

It started in Australia when they got up for business on Friday. The update had clearly been sent out last night UK time, and it has just rippled around the world.

With deliberate ransomware attacks, they'll typically take out one or two targets at a time. But in this case, it's happened to thousands of organisations at once. We've not had anything like this before.

How Crowdstrike will fix the software is yet to be determined. As I've explained, it's clear how companies can work around the issue. But for some very large organisations, this could affect their critical infrastructure and business for a long time yet – it's going to take them days to physically work round all those machines.

Can security companies ensure this doesn't happen again?

Security software is very intertwined with a computer's operating system – it's buried deep in there. There has to be a way that if something is found to be corrupted, it doesn't just keep crashing the system – this may have to be done in cooperation with Microsoft, which owns the Windows operating system.

There's got to be some way of backing out of it, and there is. However, most people trying to log into their blank PCs don't know how to put their PCs into safe mode and revert to a previous state.

At the moment, it looks like it's one corrupted file that's producing a global problem. Computers download updates all the time, so how Microsoft prevents that from happening with this update, I don't know. It's not immediately obvious. And the million dollar question is: how did this corrupted file get released in the first place?

How long before this problem is fully resolved?

It's certainly going to take days, if not weeks. It's like those hospitals in London that got attacked with ransomware. They're still suffering – there's a very long tail on these things.

And in this case, it's not just a long tail but a very broad swathe of global organisations in transport, health and everywhere else. I don't think we've seen anything like this before.

—The Conversation

SALAR ساڈا بنگلور

Boys have better access to career info in India: UNICEF

Boys in India tend to have better access to career-related information, while less than 10 per cent students use career guidance services or are even aware of their availability, according to a new UNICEF report.

The Second Edition of the Bharat Career Aspiration Report 2024 (BCAR), which tracks the state of aspiration potential, career awareness and accessibility of professional career counselling among secondary and higher secondary students from low-income families, was released on Thursday.

The report published by UNICEF YuWaah and iDreamCareer, a platform offering personalised career guidance to students is based on a survey conducted over a period of five months (August-December 2023).

A total of 4,968 students from classes 9-12 across 25 states participated in the survey.

According to the findings, only 9.36 per cent of the total respondents (465 out of 4,968) received career guidance services prior to the study and were aware of such services. The study measured career awareness among students at two levels -- basic and advanced.

"When it comes to basic and advanced career awareness levels among female and male respondents, the report reveals that boys tend to have better access to career-related information as they move up in higher education," the report stated.

According to the findings, only 9.36 per cent of the total respondents received career guidance services
PHOTO: UNICEF

"On career choices, out of 4,968 respondents, 2,999 students showed their interest towards professional careers and 704 students were interested in vocational careers. In terms of gender-wise distribution of students for professional careers, 1,872 female students (62.42 per cent) chose to pursue a professional career after their schooling," it said.

Similarly, out of 704 respondents, 56.25 per cent female students chose vocational careers. However, in both cases, it was higher than the male students, the report added.

The findings revealed that family members (30 per cent) and school teachers (13 per cent) are the top influencers in the career-related decision-making process for both male and female students.

"Out of the 21 professional career clusters, government and defence services was the top career choice for both genders. Among others, female respondents chose medical science and teaching as their preferred career choice, male respondents preferred engineering and technology, among others.

"Out of 19 vocational career clusters, the top choices for female aspirants were beauty and wellness, followed by defence, security and government services and sports and fitness. Among males, it was defence, security and government services, followed by sports and fitness and business operations and entrepreneurship," it said.

In 2018, as part of the UN Youth Policy 2030, UNICEF launched the global Generation Unlimited (GenU) movement to meet the urgent needs of young people between the ages of 10-24, expanding learning, skill development, employment and engagement opportunities.

The India chapter of Generation Unlimited -- YuWaah -- was launched in November 2019. *—PTI*

When it comes to basic and advanced career awareness levels among female and male respondents, the report reveals that boys tend to have better access to career-related information as they move up in higher education
PHOTO: FREEPIK

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

'US housing provider for migrant children engaged in sexual abuse'

Employees of the largest housing provider for unaccompanied migrant children in the US repeatedly sexually abused and harassed children in their care for at least eight years, the Justice Department has said, alleging a shocking litany of offences that took place as the company amassed billions of dollars in government contracts.

Southwest Key Programmes Inc employees, including supervisors, raped, touched or solicited sex and nude images of children beginning in 2015 and possibly earlier, the Justice Department said in a lawsuit filed this week. At least two employees have been indicted on criminal charges related to the allegations since 2020.

It was not immediately clear Thursday how many children are currently in Southwest Key's vast network of shelters across three states, which have room for more than 6,300 children.

The Justice Department did not immediately respond to emailed questions about whether it had recommended to federal officials that they remove children from the shelters or terminate the government's contracts with the nonprofit.

In a statement, Southwest Key said it was reviewing the complaint and disputed the portrayal of its care for children.

The nonprofit organisation is the largest provider of housing for unaccompanied migrant children, operating under grants from the US Department of Health and Human Services. It has 29 child migrant shelters - 17 in Texas, 10 in Arizona and two in California. The company's largest shelter in Brownsville, Texas, is at a converted Walmart with a capacity for 1,200.

The provider has been a major but somewhat low-profile player in the government's response to the arrival of hundreds of thousands of migrant children travelling alone in recent years and during the separation of thousands of families in 2017 and 2018 under President Donald Trump's administration.

Government awarded the provider more than $3 billion in contracts from 2015 to 2023.

The Border Patrol must transfer custody of unaccompanied children within 72 hours of arrest to Health and Human Services, which releases most to parents or close relatives after short stays at Southwest Key or shelters operated by other contracted providers.

Health and Human Services reported 6,228 children at all of its facilities on 17 June, according to the most recent data on its website, which does not break numbers down by shelter or provider.

The lawsuit filed against Southwest Key employees say authorities received more than 100 reports of sexual abuse or harassment at the provider's shelters since 2015
PHOTO: UNICEF

The department declined to say how many children are currently in Southwest Key's care or if the agency continues to assign children to its facilities.

The lawsuit, filed Wednesday in Austin, where Southwest Key is based, provides extensive details, saying authorities received more than 100 reports of sexual abuse or harassment at the provider's shelters since 2015.

Among the lawsuit's allegations: An employee "repeatedly sexually abused" three girls ages 5, 8 and 11 at the Casa Franklin shelter in El Paso, Texas.

The 8-year-old told investigators that the worker "repeatedly entered their bedrooms in the middle of the night to touch their private area, and he threatened to kill their families if they disclosed the abuse".

The lawsuit also alleges that an employee of the provider's shelter in Tucson, Arizona, took an 11-year-old boy to a hotel and paid him to perform sexual acts for several days in 2020.

Children were threatened with violence against themselves or family if they reported abuse, according to the lawsuit. It added that testimony from the victims revealed staff in some instances knew about the ongoing abuse and failed to report it or concealed it.

Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra said Thursday that the complaint "raises serious pattern or practice concerns" about Southwest Key.

"HHS has a zero-tolerance policy for all forms of sexual abuse, sexual harassment, inappropriate sexual behaviour, and discrimination," he said in a statement.

Texas, like Florida, revoked the licenses of facilities that house migrant children in 2021 in response to an extraordinary influx of people across its border from Mexico, creating what some critics said was an oversight void.

The lawsuit comes less than three weeks after a federal judge granted the Justice Department's request to lift special court oversight of HHS' care of unaccompanied migrant children.

President Joe Biden's administration argued that new federal safeguards rendered special oversight unnecessary 27 years after it began.

Special court oversight remains in place at the Department of Homeland Security, which includes the Border Patrol.

The Associated Press left email messages Thursday with the offices of Texas Gov. Greg Abbott and the attorneys general of Arizona and California.

Southwest grew as unaccompanied children began crossing the border in large numbers in 2014, overwhelming US authorities.

The company has found itself in the middle of controversies over immigration and has steadfastly maintained that its mission was to provide quality care for children. It names its facilities "casas", Spanish for home.

"A typical day for children in a Southwest Key Casa includes breakfast, school, lunch, dinner, homework, snacks, and bedtime," the Justice Department said in its complaint. *—PTI*

MICROSOFT OUTAGE CRIPPLES WORLD

A global technology outage grounded flights, knocked banks offline and media outlets off air on Friday in a massive disruption that affected companies and services around the world and highlighted dependence on software from a handful of providers.

Cybersecurity firm CrowdStrike said that the issue believed to be behind the outage was not a security incident or cyberattack.

The issue affected Microsoft 365 apps and services, and escalating disruptions continued hours after the technology company said it was gradually fixing it.

The website DownDectector, which tracks user-reported internet outages, recorded growing outages in services at Visa, ADT security and Amazon, and airlines including American Airlines and Delta.

Windows computers and tablets crashed in countries from the US to China and Australia, with reports of forced restarts of devices spreading across social media. Many affected machines were unable to restart, instead showing a blue error screen sometimes called the "blue screen of death."

Some users may still be unable to access certain Microsoft 365 apps and services, including Teams video conferencing.

The outage has come across as bad timing for tech stocks, which have driven the broader stock market higher this year, most notably among companies tied to artificial intelligence. *—Agencies*

Everyday life affected as Windows shuts down

AUSTRALIA
- Virgin Australia and Jetstar airlines experienced delays and departure screens went blank at Sydney airport.
- Electronic systems went down at stores in Woolworths.
- National Australia Bank faced disruptions. Australia's largest bank, Commonwealth Bank, said some customers had been unable to transfer money due to the service outage.
- National broadcaster ABC said that its operations had been disrupted.

UNITED KINGDOM
- Long queues reported at London's Stansted and Gatwick airports.
- Largest rail franchise also faced "widespread IT issues", warning of possible cancellations.
- Stores were unable to accept contactless payments.
- Doctors' in England reported issues with booking appointments.
- Sky News was off air for several hours.
- London Stock Exchange experienced issues with its news service.
- Manchester United football club today's ticket release until Monday

UNITED STATES
- United, Delta, and American Airlines grounded flights globally.
- Officials in some U.S. states, including Alaska, Virginia and Iowa, warned of 911 problems in their areas.
- More than 300 flights were delayed and more than 100 flights were cancelled so far on Friday at the three major airports in the New York city area — JFK, LaGuardia and Newark Liberty in New Jersey

JAPAN
- Tokyo-Narita airport reported service disruptions.

SINGAPORE
- Singapore's Changi airport also said check-ins were being handled manually.

ISRAEL
- 15 hospitals switched to manual processes, ambulances were redirected new cases.

NETHERLANDS
- Long queues were reported at Amsterdam's Schiphol airport.

POLAND
- The Baltic Hub in Gdansk reported hampered terminal operations.

EUROPE
- Ryanair experienced potential disruptions across its network.
- Many shops globally conducted cash-only transactions due to the outage.

SOUTH AFRICA
- Johannesburg Stock Exchange issued a notice stating that the FTSE indices are not updating.
- South Africa's largest bank Capitec said that clients have faced difficulties accessing various banking services, including online banking, mobile app transactions

IRELAND
- Department of Health said about two thirds of GP practices were affected as they could not view and update patient records
- In hospitals, radiotherapy services, patient bookings for operating theatres were affected

NEW ZEALAND
- A Spokesperson for New Zealand's Parliament said its computer systems had also been affected.

UAE
- Some online services of the UAE govt were affected.
- Dubai International Airport also confirmed that their operations were impacted

SINGAPORE
- In Changi Airport, long queues were seen in check-in counters. Several airlines, including Scoot, switched to manual check-ins.

SOUTH KOREA
- Online game companies here were also affected by the IT outage
- It affected the airport ticketing of Jeju Air Co., Eastar Jet Co. and Air Premia Inc

Travellers wait in Terminal 1 for check-in at Hamburg Airport, in Hamburg, Germany, on Friday **PHOTO: PTI**

MAJOR TECH OUTAGES RECENTLY

BRITISH AIRWAYS
Major IT failure brought down the networks of British Airways, affecting its London hubs of Heathrow and Gatwick in 2017. Over 1,000 flights were cancelled and 75,000 passengers were affected by the disruption.

ALPHABET
Google's most popular services including YouTube, Gmail and Google Drive were down for an hour in 2020. More than 12,000 YouTube users were affected in various parts of the world, including the US, UK and India.

META
Meta-owned social media platforms Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram went down for six hours in 2021, with 10.6 million reporting problems globally. The outage was caused by a faulty configuration change.

X
X suffered a major outage in 2022, leaving tens of thousands of users globally. According to DownDetector, more than 10,000 affected users were from the US, followed by 2,500 from Japan and about 2,500 from the UK.

Houthis claim responsibility for Tel Aviv attack

TEL AVIV, 19 JULY

Yemen's Houthi rebels on Friday claimed responsibility for an early morning drone strike that hit a part of central Tel Aviv near the United States Embassy, leaving at least 10 injured and one dead. The aerial strike rumbled through the streets causing shards of shrapnel to rain down and spreading shards of glass over a large radius. Houthis have launched drones toward Israel throughout the nine-month-long war, in solidarity with the Palestinian people. ***—AP***

Senior Al-Qaeda leader arrested in Pakistan

LAHORE, 19 JULY

Law enforcement agencies in Pakistan on Friday arrested a senior Al-Qaeda leader, Amin ul Haq, describing him as a close aide of slain terrorist Osama bin Laden.

A Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) of Punjab Police Spokesperson said a significant breakthrough in the fight against terrorism has been made as the department in collaboration with various intelligence agencies arrested Haq during a planned operation in Punjab province. ***—AP***

Big Bang's Prof Proton, Bob Newhart dies at 94

NEW YORK, 19 JULY

American stand-up comedy legend Bob Newhart, whose deadpan delivery style earned him numerous awards, has died at the age of 94. The star of TV series The Bob Newhart Show, Newhart passed away at home after a series of short illnesses, his publicist said in a statement provided to the BBC. Newhart became a stand-up comic after starting his career as an accountant in Chicago. More recently, he starred in classic Christmas film Elf and The Big Bang Theory.

—BBC News

Police fire tear gas shells and rubber bullets to disperse students shouting slogans in favor of quota system in Dhaka, Bangladesh **PHOTO: PTI**

B'desh forces fire bullets at protesters

DHAKA, 19 JULY

Police and security officials in Bangladesh fired bullets and tear gas at protesters and banned all gatherings in the capital on Friday, as internet and mobile services were cut off after days of deadly clashes over the allocation of government jobs.

The protests, which began weeks ago but escalated sharply on Monday, represent the biggest challenge to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina since she was won a fourth consecutive term in a January election that was boycotted by the main Opposition parties.

The latest clashes follow the bloodiest day of the protests to date, with local media reporting 22 people killed as protesting students attempted to impose a "complete shutdown" on the country.

The border guards shot at the right crowd with rifles and sound grenades, while police officers fired tear gas and rubber bullets. Bullets littered the streets, which were also marked by smears of blood.

Internet services and mobile data were widely disrupted on Thursday night and remained down on Friday in the capital, Dhaka. Social media platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp were also not loading. It coincided with a widespread internet outage on Friday that disrupted flights, banks, media outlets and companies around the world *—AP*

Obama wants Biden to pull out of prez race

WASHINGTON, 19 JULY

Democrats at the highest levels are making a critical push for President Joe Biden to rethink his election bid, with former President Barack Obama expressing concerns to allies and Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi privately telling Biden the party could lose the ability to seize control of the House if he doesn't step away from the 2024 race.

Isolated as he battles a Covid-19 infection at home in Delaware, the president is relying on a few longtime aides as he weighs whether to bow to the mounting pressure to drop out.

The Biden For President campaign is calling an all-staff meeting for Friday. It's heading into a critical weekend for the party as Republican Donald Trump wraps up a heady Republican National Convention in Milwaukee and Democrats, racing time, consider the extraordinary possibility of Biden stepping aside for a new presidential nominee before their own convention next month in Chicago.

Campaign officials said Biden was even more committed to staying in the race.

He has been told the campaign is having trouble raising money, and some Democrats see an opportunity as he is away from the campaign for a few days to encourage his exit. *—AP*

Democrats think Kamala good choice

Washington, 19 July

As President Joe Biden faces a growing drumbeat of pressure to drop his reelection bid, a majority of Democrats think his vice president would make a good president herself. A new poll from the AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research found that about 6 in 10 Democrats believe Kamala Harris would do a good job in the top slot. About 2 in 10 Democrats don't believe she would, and another 2 in 10 say they don't know enough to say. For her part, Harris has remained completely loyal to Biden. *—AP*

Trump calls for unity in his speech

MILWAUKEE, 19 JULY

In his first major public address since surviving an assassination attempt, Donald Trump gave a clarion call for unity as he accepted his Republican party's presidential nomination with a pledged to deliver a government that will begin four greatest years in American history if he is elected in November.

The 78-year-old took to the stage at the Republican National Convention Thursday night to accept his party's nomination for a third consecutive presidential bid.

In his first speech after the assassination bid on him on Saturday in Pennsylvania, Trump said he stands before Americans with a message of confidence, strength, and hope.

Donald Trump's elusive wife Melania made a rare appearance at the Republican National Convention in support of his third bid for the White House, but broke with decades of tradition by not speaking at the high-profile event.

Trump spoke for one hour and 32 minutes at the Republican National Convention while accepting his party's presidential nomination, breaking his own record for the longest acceptance speech in recent history. *—AP*

Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump with wife Melania Trump **PHOTO: AP**

7.4-MAGNITUDE QUAKE HITS CHILE

SANTIAGO, 19 JULY

A magnitude 7.4 earthquake hit northern Chile near its border with Argentina late Thursday, according to the US Geological Survey. There were no immediate reports of injuries or major damages.

The quake's epicenter was 45km east-southeast of San Pedro de Atacama, Chile, and it had a depth of 117km, according to the USGS. President Gabriel Boric wrote on X that according to preliminary information there were "no reports of injuries or serious damages." The quake did not activate a tsunami alarm. *—AP*

COP INJURED IN PARIS KNIFE ATTACK

PARIS, 19 JULY

A police officer was wounded in a knife attack in Paris on Thursday in the high-end Champs-Elysees neighbourhood and the assailant was shot and died of his injuries, authorities said, just days before the opening ceremony of the Summer Olympics.

Paris police chief Laurent Nunez said the attack did not appear linked to the Olympics and no terrorist motive was suspected. Thursday's knife attack comes just days after a man stabbed and wounded a French soldier patrolling Paris on Monday outside the Gare de l'Est train station in eastern Paris. *—AP*

Bus set on fire, police car overturned in UK riots

LONDON, 19 JULY

A double-decker bus was set on fire and a police vehicle was overturned amid stone-pelting and disorder as a riot broke out in Leeds, northern England, over what the local council has described as a "family incident".

"It has quietened, it is calm. We have already started the clean up on the ground," Leeds City Council chief executive Tom Riordan told the BBC on Friday.

"There was a family incident earlier in the day that police and our officials attended that the local community got concerned about and that appeared to be the trigger of concern for the groups of people..." he said. *— BBC News*

16 YRS IN PRISON

Russia convicts US reporter of espionage

YEKATERINBURG, 19 JULY

Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich was convicted Friday of espionage and sentenced to 16 years in a maximum-security prison on charges that his employer and the US government have rejected as fabricated.

The conclusion of his swift and secretive trial in the country's highly politicized legal system could potentially clear the way for a prisoner swap between Moscow and Washington.

Gershkovich, his head shaved, looked calm as he stood in a glass defendants' cage in the Sverdlovsk Regional Court and listened impassively to the verdict.

Evan Gershkovich **PHOTO: PTI**

When the judge asked him if he understood it, the journalist replied yes.

Closing arguments took place behind closed doors at the trial, where Gershkovich did not admit any guilt, according to the court's press service. Prosecutors requested an 18-year sentence, but the judge opted for a shorter term. *—AP*

MICROSOFT OUTAGE HITS TRADERS

Sensex & Nifty say they are not impacted due to the global outage; Mkt tumbles after 4-day record

MUMBAI, 19 JULY

Indian investors were also among the lot hit by global Microsoft outage. Dalal Street trader reported technical glitches on many domestic brokerage platforms including Angel One, Nuvama, 5Paise, Motilal Oswal and IIFL Securities. Brokerage firms 5paisa has told clients that its systems are affected as a result of the Microsoft issue, while users from Angel One, Nuvama, Motilal Oswal also reported tech outages on various social media platforms. Another tech-based discount broker Groww said it does not work with CrowdStrike. Therefore its services haven't been affected, it mentioned.

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty tumbled on Friday as investors preferred to book profits after four days of record-breaking rally and weak trends from global markets.

Fall in blue-chip Reliance Industries also dragged the benchmarks lower.

30-share BSE Sensex hit its new all-time high of 81,587.76 in the initial trade but failed to carry forward the winning momentum and tanked 738.81 points or 0.91 per cent to settle below the 81,000-mark at 80,604.65.

NSE Nifty tumbled 269.95 points or 1.09 per cent and ended at 24,530.90 after hitting its fresh record peak of 24,854.80 during the opening bell. During the day, it declined 292.7 points or 1.18 per cent to 24,508.15.

Among the Sensex pack, Tata Steel tumbled over 5 per cent while JSW Steel tanked nearly 5 per cent.

Tata Motors, NTPC, UltraTech Cement, Tech Mahindra, Bajaj Finance, Power Grid, Mahindra & Mahindra, and Reliance Industries were the other major laggards.

Infosys climbed nearly 2 per cent after the IT major reported a 7 per cent rise in consolidated net profit at Rs 6,368 crore in the April-June quarter and raised its growth outlook for the current financial year, signalling an improvement in the IT segment.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude declined 0.07 per cent to USD 85.05 a barrel. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

NSE, BSE & SBI say functioning normally, not impacted by outage

Leading bourse Country's leading stock exchanges NSE and BSE on Friday said they are not impacted due to the global outage of Microsoft systems amid reports of disruptions in functioning of several airlines, banks, media outlets worldwide.

SBI says systems working fine, unaffected by Microsoft outage Country's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI) on Friday said its systems are unaffected by the Microsoft global outage. "We are all fine," its chairman Dinesh Khara told PTI, when asked about the impact of the global outage. *—PTI*

Infosys shares jump 5%; valuation at 20K cr

NEW DELHI, 19 JULY

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

Shares of Infosys climbed nearly 5 per cent in morning trade on Friday, a day after the IT major reported a 7 per cent rise in consolidated net profit in the April-June quarter and raised its growth outlook for the current financial year.

The stock jumped 4.76 per cent to hit a 52-week high of Rs 1,843 on the BSE.

At the NSE, it climbed 4.88 per cent to Rs 1,844 -- its 52-week high.

The company's market valuation rallied Rs 20,843.19 crore to Rs 7,51,247.27 crore during the morning trade.

The stock emerged as the biggest gainer among the BSE Sensex and NSE Nifty firms.

IT major Infosys on Thursday reported a 7 per cent rise in consolidated net profit at Rs 6,368 crore in the April-June quarter and raised its growth outlook for the current financial year, signalling an improvement in the IT segment.

The consolidated revenue of Infosys increased by 3.6 per cent to Rs 39,315 crore during the reported quarter, from Rs 37,933 crore a year ago. *—PTI*

Gold snaps six-day rally; declines ₹750 per 10 grams

NEW DELHI, 19 JULY

Gold prices tumbled by Rs 750 to Rs 75,650 per 10 grams, snapping a six-day winning streak in the local market on Friday, tracking a weak trend globally amid subdued demand by jewellers. According to All India Sarafa Assocation, the precious metal rates had closed at Rs 76,400 per 10 grams in the previous session. Meanwhile, gold of 99.5 per cent purity also declined by Rs 800 to Rs 75,300 per 10 grams. It had settled at Rs 76,100 per 10 grams on Thursday. Silver prices also nosedived by Rs 1,000 to Rs 93,000 per kg. In the previous session, it had ended at Rs 94,000 per kg. Traders attributed the decline in gold prices to a weak trend in the overseas markets and easing demand by jewellers within the country. *—PTI*

Zydus Lifesciences gets USFDA nod for diabetes drug

NEW DELHI, 19 JULY

Zydus Lifesciences on Friday said it has received approval from the US health regulator for its new drug application for a diabetes medication. The company has received final approval for its new drug application (NDA) from the US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) to market Zituvimet XR (sitagliptin and metformin hydrochloride) extended-release tablets, the drug firm said in a statement. With this, Zydus has all three NDAs of Sitagliptin (base) and combination franchise approved, it added. Zituvimet XR (sitagliptin and metformin hydrochloride) extended-release tablets are indicated as an adjunct to diet and exercise to improve glycemic control in adults with type 2 diabetes mellitus. The product will be manufactured at the group's formulation manufacturing facility in Ahmedabad SEZ, Zydus Lifesciences said. Shares of Zydus Lifesciences were trading 2.04 per cent down at Rs 1,161.10 apiece on the BSE. *—PTI*

Tata Play, Paytm & HDFC Bank report loss, revenue dips

NEW DELHI, 19 JULY

Leading DTH operator Tata Play (erstwhile known as Tata Sky) has reported widening of its consolidated loss to Rs 353.9 crore, as revenue from operations declined 4.32 per cent to Rs 4,304.62 crore in the financial year ended March 31, according to financial data accessed by business intelligence platform Tofler.

Total expenses of Tata Play, in which Tata Sons now owns 50 per cent share, has increased 1.47 per cent to Rs 4,760.55 crore in FY24. Earlier, it stood at Rs 4,691.25 crore for the financial year ended in March, 2023.

Paytm April-June quarter loss widens to Rs 840 cr

Fintech firm One97 Communications, which owns Paytm brand, on Friday said its loss has widened to Rs 840 crore in the quarter ended June 30, primarily due to continued impact of restrictions on Paytm Payments Bank Ltd.

The company had posted a loss of Rs 358.4 crore in the same period a year ago, according to a regulatory filing by the company.

PHOTO: TATAPLAY.COM

The consolidated revenue of Paytm declined 33.48 per cent to Rs 1,639.1 crore during the reported quarter, from Rs 2,464.2 crore in the same period a year ago.

HDFC Bank CSR spend crosses Rs 945 cr in FY24

Private sector HDFC Bank has reported a corporate social responsibility (CSR) spend of Rs 945.31 crore for the financial year 2023-24, an increase of nearly Rs 125 crore from the previous year.

The bank's CSR programme, Parivartan, has been active for over a decade and its initiatives, spread across 28 states and 8 Union Territories, have impacted over 10 crore lives, HDFC Bank said in a release. *—PTI*

Forex reserve jumps to all-time high of $666.85B

MUMBAI, 19 JULY

India's forex reserves jumped by USD 9.699 billion to an all-time high of USD 666.854 billion for the week ended 12 July, RBI said on Friday.

In the previous reporting week, the kitty had increased by USD 5.158 billion to USD 657.155 billion, surpassing the previous high of USD 655.817 billion for the week ended 7 June.

For the week ended 12 July, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, increased by USD 8.361 billion to USD 585.47 billion, the data released on Friday showed.

Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves.

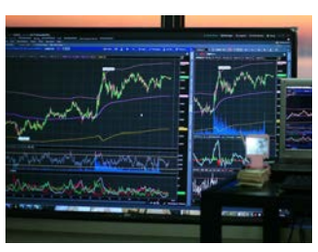


PHOTO: PIXABAY

Gold reserves increased by USD 1.231 billion to USD 58.663 billion during the week, the RBI said.

India's reserve position with the IMF was up by USD 32 million to USD 4.609 billion in the reporting week, the apex bank data showed. *—PTI*

Rupee falls 7P to close at all-time low

MUMBAI, 19 JULY

The rupee depreciated 7 paise to settle at its all-time low of 83.70 against the US dollar on Friday, weighed down by strong American currency and muted trend in domestic equities.

Forex traders said weak domestic markets and elevated oil prices pressured the rupee, however, likely Reserve Bank of India (RBI) intervention prevented a sharp fall in the domestic unit.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.64, and touched an intra-day high of 83.60 and a low of 83.70 against the dollar.

It finally settled at an all-time low level of 83.70 against the American currency, registering a loss of 7 paise.

On Thursday, the rupee depreciated 5 paise and settled at a historic low of 83.63 against the US dollar. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading higher by 0.16 per cent at 104.33.

PHOTO: PIXABAY

Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, were trading marginally lower by 0.07 per cent at USD 85.05 per barrel.

In the domestic equity market, the 30-share BSE Sensex tumbled 738.81 points to settle at 80,604.65 and Nifty dropped 269.95 points to 24,530.90.

FIIs were net buyers in the capital markets on Friday as they purchased shares worth Rs 1,506.12 crore. *—PTI*

Reliance net profit falls 5% in Q1

NEW DELHI, 19 JULY

Reliance Industries Ltd on Friday reported a 5 per cent drop in its June net profit, hurt by weak refining margins and fuel cracks as well as higher depreciation cost.

The consolidated net profit of Rs 15,138 crore, or Rs 22.37 per share, in April-June was compared to Rs 16,011 crore, or Rs 23.66 a share, in the year-ago period, according to a stock exchange filing by the company.

Sequentially, profit fell 20 per cent when compared to Rs 18,951 crore earnings in the January-March quarter.

Revenue from operation was up at Rs 2.36 lakh crore from Rs 2.10 lakh crore in April-June 2023. *—PTI*

PHOTO: RIL.COM

RBI: No plans to promote banks via business houses

MUMBAI, 19 JULY

Governor Shaktikanta Das on Friday said the Reserve Bank does not have any plan to allow business houses to promote banks at present.

Allowing corporate houses to promote banks exposes one to conflict of interest risks and related-party transactions, Das said, speaking at an event organized by the Financial Express here.

"At this point, there is no thinking in that direction," Das said, replying to a specific query on whether there is any consideration to allow business houses.

RBI had disqualified a long list of conglomerates from floating a lender in the last round of licensing.

The issue was revived again in 2020, with RBI working group supporting it, given the potential to get the capital for helping meet the country's growth asDas said that licensing of universal banks has been made on tap and added that applications are welcome. *—PTI*

'MAKE IN INDIA, MAKE FOR WORLD'

Prime Minister Narendra Modi meets defence major Lockheed Martin's CEO Jim Taiclet and lauds its commitment to 'Make in India, Make for World' initiative on Friday. Lockheed Martin has begun exploring the possibility of setting up a manufacturing line in India for its C-130J aircraft as it competes with Airbus and Embraer PHOTO: PTI

VODAFONE IDEA TO RAISE ₹615 CR THROUGH SHARES

NEW DELHI, 19 JULY

Vodafone Idea approved the allotment of more than 40 crore shares on a preferential basis to Nokia Solutions and Networks India and to Ericsson India, the company informed the exchange in a filing.

The company stated that this preferential allotment is in accordance with SEBI's regulations which totals around Rs 615 crore and represents a strategic move to enhance the company's capital base.

According to the statement by the company, the breakdown includes around 25 crore equity shares to Nokia Solutions and Networks India Pvt. and over 15 crore equity shares to Ericsson India Pvt.

The issue price per equity share was set at Rs. 14.80, including a premium of Rs. 4.80 per share at a face value of Rs 10 per share.

The shares of Vodafone Idea closed at Rs 16.32 after a decline of more than 2 per cent on Thursday. *—ANI*

SpiceJet board to raise capital via QIP

MUMBAI, 19 JULY

No-frills carrier SpiceJet on Friday said the company will hold a board meeting on July 23 to consider raising fresh capital through qualified institutional placement (QIP) basis.

"A meeting of the Board of Directors of SpiceJet Ltd will be held on 23 July, 2024 (Tuesday), inter-alia, to consider and approve raising fresh capital through issue of eligible securities to qualified institutional buyers by way of qualified institutional placement...," the airline said in a regulatory filing.

In January this year, SpiceJet received in-principle approval from the BSE for a fund infusion of Rs 2,242-crore and raised Rs 1,060 crore under preferential issue in two tranches.

The Gurugram-based airline announced a multi-fold jump in standalone profit after tax (PAT) to Rs 119 crore for the January-March quarter of 2023-24, over Rs 16.85 crore PAT in the corresponding quarter of the previous year.

For the full fiscal year 2023-24, the airline posted a loss of Rs 409.43 crore. It had reported a loss of Rs 1,503 crore. *—PTI*

'HEERAMANDI' & 'CHAMKILA' BIG WINNERS

For Netflix, India is 3rd country in revenue growth

NEW DELHI, 19 JULY

Propelled by the popularity of titles such as 'Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar', 'The Great Indian Kapil Show' and 'Amar Singh Chamkila', India has emerged as the third country in revenue per cent growth for streaming service Netflix in its second quarter.

The streamer released its second quarter earnings for 2024 on Thursday evening and Indian content seems to have made significant strides this year alongside popular international shows such as 'Bridgerton 3', 'Baby Reindeer', Korean drama 'Queen of Tears' and films such as 'Hit Man' and 'Under Paris'.

India and the UK have had especially strong slates this year, according to the streamer.

In Q2, India was the second and third country in terms of paid net adds and revenue per cent growth, respectively due to the success of titles like Sanjay Leela Bhansali's 'Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar', which had 15 million views to become the streamer's biggest Indian drama series ever.

Imtiaz Ali-directed biopic 'Amar Singh Chamkila' with 8.3 million views was another major title for Netflix, which also registered success with licensed films such as Kiran Rao's 'Laapataa Ladies' and Ajay Devgn-starrer horror drama 'Shaitaan'.

From the UK, 'Baby Reindeer', which has earned 11 Emmy nominations, emerged as the big hit with 88.4 million views. *—PTI*

Heeramandi was the biggest drama series ever with 15 million views on Netflix PHOTO: NETFLIX.COM

India also becomes 2nd largest market in paid users in Q2

Netflix added 8.05 million subscribers across the world during the second quarter of 2024, out of which 2.83 million users came from the Asia-Pacific (APAC) region. Netflix's overall revenue rose to $9.56 billion for the quarter, a 16.8% growth over last year *—PTI*

Electronic production to triple by 2025-26: RBI

NEW DELHI, 19 JULY

India's electronic produce has surged to 3 per cent of GDP in 2023-24, highlighted in the July 2024, monthly bulletin of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

The bulletin also highlighted that the value of electronics produced has surged from USD 37 bn in 2015-16 to USD 115 bn in 2023-24.

"India's efforts to transform into a manufacturing powerhouse are already bearing fruit - electronics manufacturing. The value of electronics produced rose from USD 37 bn to USD 115 bn (3 per cent of GDP) between 2015-16 and 2023-24" said the report.

Currently, India's production of electronics accounts for 3 per cent of the global total, with this share growing faster than any other country.

In 2023-24, India exported USD 15.6 billion of mobile phones and USD 1.5 billion in April 2024. Apple sources about one in seven of its iPhones from India, double what it did a year ago. Samsung, a South Korean rival, has its largest phone-making facility. *—ANI*

PHOTO: PTI

PHOTO: © FABRICE

Australian Olympic powerbroker Kevan Gosper dies

CAIRNS, 19 JULY

Former Australian Olympic administrator Kevan Gosper has died following a short illness, aged 90. Gosper won an Olympic silver medal on the Australian men's 4x400 meters relay team at the 1956 Melbourne Games, before embarking on a career as one of the nation's top sports administrators. He was an International Olympic Committee member from 1977 to 2013, twice serving as vice-president and being elected to the organization's executive. Gosper served as president of the Australian Olympic Federation (now the Australian Olympic Committee (AOC)) and was a pivotal figure in delivering Sydney's Olympics in 2000 as the vice-president of the organizing committee.—*PTI*

PHOTO: @KASPER_HJULMAND

Hjulmand steps down as Denmark coach

COPENHAGEN, 19 JULY

Denmark coach Kasper Hjulmand decided to leave the job Friday and not take the team into qualifying for the 2026 World Cup. Hjulmand said in a statement that the team needed new energy after the European Championship, where Denmark was eliminated in the round of 16 by Germany after a game that featured one of the tournament's most controversial refereeing decisions.—*PTI*

Marcus Rashford receives six-month driving ban

NEW DELHI, 19 JULY

Manchester United forward Marcus Rashford has been given a six-month driving ban for speeding in his Rolls-Royce, according to Sky Sports. The 26-year-old England attacker was reportedly caught overspeeding. He was driving at 104 mph on the M60 in Manchester last year in December. According to Sky Sports, a court official confirmed that the ban was imposed on Rashford and that he had been fined £1,666, and ordered to pay £120 court costs and a £66 surcharge. Under the Single Justice Procedure, Rashford admitted the offense. Rashford was caught overspeeding less than three months after he crashed a different Rolls-Royce after leaving the Carrington training ground.—*PTI*

UTT: Top paddlers to compete in Chennai

CHENNAI, 19 JULY

Defending champions Goa Challengers will face newcomers Jaipur Patriots in the opening match of the Ultimate Table Tennis (UTT) scheduled to be held here from 22 to August 7 September. A total of 23 ties will be held at the Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium as eight teams will compete for the coveted title. World No. 10 Bernadette Szocs, World No. 16 Nina Mittelham, and Nigerian legend and current World No. 19 Quadri Aruna are among the top players participating. They will be joined by star Indian paddlers, including Achanta Sharath Kamal (WR 40), Sreeja Akula (WR 25), and Manika Batra (WR 28). The event will also feature promising Indian talents such as Yashaswini Ghorpade, Diya Chitale, Poymantee Baisya, Abhinandh PB, Jeet Chandra, and Yashansh Malik. The franchise-based league will see a total of 48 players, including 16 internationals, in action. —*PTI*

France won't let its athletes wear hijab

United Nations quickly criticised the ban saying, 'no one should impose on a woman'

PARIS, 19 JULY

Paris's mayor may be celebrating the city's readiness to host the Olympics next week by swimming in the formerly E. coli–infested Seine, but not everyone is impressed with the host city.

"French authorities made it emphatically and unashamedly clear ... that their proclaimed efforts at improving gender equality and inclusivity in sports do not apply to one group of women and girls — those Muslim women and girls who wear religious head coverings," a new report from Amnesty International says.

In September, France's sports minister, Amélie Oudéa-Castéra, said the country's secularism principle and its rules against showing religious symbols during sporting events would be upheld for athletes competing for France during the Olympics. "That means the prohibition of any type of proselytizing and the absolute neutrality of the public service," Castéra said. "Which means that the representatives of our delegations, in our French teams, will not wear the headscarf." France has banned women and girls from wearing headscarves in public schools since 2004. The United Nations quickly criticized the ban, saying, "No one should impose on a woman what she needs to wear, or not wear," per The Guardian. The French Sports Ministry clarified that athletes could wear hijabs in the Olympic Village but not while competing. In addition to hijabs, athletes are prohibited from wearing "any other accessory or garment expressing their religious affiliation when representing France in a national or international sporting competition." Athletes from other countries have to follow rules set by their federations and the International Olympic Committee. —*PTI*

PHOTO: FREEPIK

Amnesty denounces France's hijab ban as 'discriminatory'

The ban on French women athletes wearing the hijab at the Paris Olympic Games exposes the "discriminatory hypocrisy" of French authorities and the "craven weakness" of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), Amnesty International said. In a new report titled "We can't breathe anymore. Even sports, we can't do them anymore", the rights group examines the negative impact of the hijab ban on Muslim women and girls at all levels of sport in France.

Israel cleared to play in Olympic soccer

ZURICH, 19 JULY

FIFA has postponed a decision on a Palestinian proposal to suspend Israel from international soccer because of the conflict with Hamas, clearing the way for the Israeli men's national team to play at the Paris Olympics.

Soccer's world governing body had been set to make a decision Saturday at an extraordinary council meeting after asking for an independent legal assessment of the Palestinian proposal two months ago. That decision would have come just four days before the start of the Olympic soccer tournament, where Israel had been drawn into a group with Japan, Mali, and Paraguay. However, FIFA said Thursday that it had pushed back the timeline because "more time is needed to conclude this process with due care and completeness" meaning a decision is now set to come after the Olympics have finished. —*PTI*

SO NEAR YET SO FAR: INDIA'S TRYST WITH FOURTH-PLACE OLYMPIC HEARTBREAKS

HERE IS A LOOK AT THE INSTANCES WHEN INDIAN ATHLETES CAME CLOSE BUT ENDED AT JUST THAT

1956, MELBOURNE
Indian football team lost to Bulgaria 0-3 in bronze medal match

1960, ROME
The legendary Milkha Singh missed out on a bronze by the narrowest of margins.

1980, MOSCOW
Indian women's hockey team lost its last match to erstwhile USSR 1-3 to finish behind Zimbabwe, Czechoslovakia and the hosts.

1984, LOS ANGELES
PT Usha missed the 400m hurdles bronze by 1/100th of a second, making it the closest-ever miss for an Indian athlete in any competition.

2004, ATHENS
Celebrated duo of Leander Paes and Mahesh Bhupathi missed out on the podium at the Athens Games.

2012, LONDON
Shooter Joydeep Karmakar experienced the terrible feeling of finishing a place behind the bronze medal winner in this edition.

2016, RIO DE JANEIRO
Gymnast Dipa Karmakar finished fourth overall with a score of 15.066 and missed the bronze medal by 0.150 points.

2020, TOKYO
Indian women's hockey team once again endured a similar pain at the Tokyo Olympics, missing out on the bronze.

BRITISH OPEN GOLF

Tiger Woods of the United States walks with compatriots Patrick Cantlay and Xander Schauffele down the first fairway during their second round of British Open Golf Championships at Royal Troon golf club in Troon, Scotland, on Friday PHOTO: PTI

India makes winning start in WJ squash event

HOUSTON, 19 JULY

India made a winning start in the World Junior Squash Championships with both the boys and girls' team winning their respective fixtures comprehensively.

While the boys eased past Kuwait 3-0 in their Group F encounter, the girl's team, led by national champion Anahat Singh, defeated Chinese Taipei by an identical margin in Group D on Thursday.

The boys will next take on Brazil on Friday.

The girl's team, on the other hand, has two matches scheduled against Brazil and Australia. —*PTI*

NORDEA OPEN

Nadal comes from 4-1 down in 2nd set to beat Norrie

BASTAD, 19 JULY

Rafael Nadal recovered from a tumble and a 4-1 deficit in the second set to beat fifth-seeded Cameron Norrie 6-4, 6-4 in the second round of the Nordea Open.

Nadal fell over in the first game of the second set after attempting to slide on the clay, and needed treatment on a couple of bleeding scrapes. He then went a break down before winning the last five games of the match to reach his first quarterfinal since January.

"Great feelings, it's been a while without playing on the tour since Roland Garros and I had a chance to compete against a great player like Cameron," Nadal said.

Rafael Nadal PHOTO: PTI

Nadal is playing at the tournament in Sweden for the first time since he won the title as a 19-year-old in 2005 as he prepares for the Olympic tournament on clay at Roland Garros in Paris.

Rune retires with a knee injury

Frenchman Arthur Fils, the No. 5 seed, advanced to the semi-finals of the Hamburg Open when Dane Holger Rune, the second seed, retired with a knee injury at the Rothenbaum Tennis Center on Friday.

Fils, ranked No 28, led 6-4, 4-1 when Rune called time on the match. The injury is a worry for the Dane with the Olympics just one week away, but the hope will be that this was precautionary more than anything else. —*PTI*

India starts campaign with 7-wicket win

BUDAPEST, 19 JULY

India beat Pakistan by 7 wickets in their Women's Asia Cup T20 match at Rangiri Dambulla International Stadium, Dambulla on Friday. Shafali Verma (40 off 29) and Smriti Mandhana (45 off 31) put a solid 85-run opening partnership in the chase of 109 to throw Pakistan out of the game. Earlier, Deepti Sharma picked three wickets while Pooja Vastrakar, Renuka Singh, and Shreyanka Patil took two each as India bowled out Pakistan for 108.

Deepti returned 3 for 20 while Renuka picked 2 for 14. Vastrakar was a bit expensive with figures of 2 for 31. With a score of 25, Sidra Ameen was the top run-getter for Pakistan after the side won the toss and opted to bat first. Defending champions India dished out a fine bowling effort led by experienced off-spinner Deepti Sharma (3/20) to bowl out arch-foes Pakistan for a subpar 108 in their opening Women's Asia Cup match here on Friday.

India, after being asked to bowl first, tasted their first success in the second over itself when pacer Pooja Vastrakar (2/31) dismissed Gull Feroza, caught by skipper Harmanpreet Kaur at mid-on.

Indian players celebrate victory PHOTO: X @BCCIWOMEN

Vastrakar again struck soon, dismissing the other Pakistan opener Muneeba Ali with a short-pitched delivery, caught by Jemimah Rodrigues at cover, reducing Pakistan to 26 for 2 after the fourth over.

Brief scores:

Pakistan: 108 all out in 19.2 overs (Sidra Amin 25, Fatima Sana 22 not out; Deepti Sharma 3/20, Renuka Singh 2/14, Pooja Vastrakar 2/31).

India: 109/3 in 14.1 overs (Smriti Mandhana 45, Shafali Verma 40).

Khadka, Barma sparkle as Nepal beat UAE by 6 wickets

Opener Samjhana Khadka made a breezy, unbeaten fifty, and pacer Indu Barma grabbed three wickets as Nepal outclassed UAE by six wickets to make a winning start to their campaign in the Women's T20 Asia Cup here on Friday.

Khadka (71 not out, 45b, 11x4) played a fine hand to take her side past the target of 116 in 16.1 overs.

The Emirates' outfit could not fight against the more experienced Nepal bowlers led by Barma (3/19), ending up at a below-par 115 for eight.

However, Nepal had to go through some anxious moments when they lost three wickets to off-spinner Kavisha Egodage (3/12) which temporarily halted their progress after the Power Play.

But Khadka singlehandedly guided Nepal's chase, playing shots around the park.

Earlier, Khushi Sharma (36, 39 balls, 2x4) and Egodage (22, 26b, 2x4) arrested a slide after UAE found themselves at 38 for three after the Power Play segment. But their knocks consumed way too many balls and none of the other batters also could give momentum to UAE innings, stumbling against some accurate Nepal bowling.

Brief scores: UAE Women: 115/8 in 20 overs (Khushi Sharma 36, Kavisha Egodage 22; Indu Barma 3/19) lost to Nepal: 118/4 in 16.1 overs (Samjhana Khadka 72 not out; Kavisha Egodage 3/12) by six wickets. —*PTI*

Verstappen's Red Bull battling 3-headed threat

BUDAPEST, 19 JULY

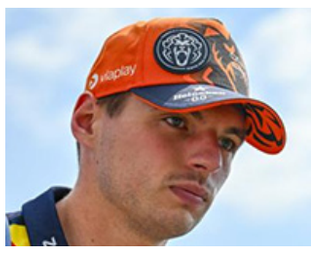
Just when Lewis Hamilton decided he needed to switch teams, here comes Mercedes and finally gives him a competitive car.

Mercedes has elbowed its way into the most tightly contested Formula One season since three-time reigning champion Max Verstappen wrested the mantle of serial winner from Hamilton in 2021.

But the seven-time world champion and Mercedes teammate George Russell have won back-to-back races, with Russell finishing first in Austria before Hamilton surprisingly took the victory at Silverstone, and the team arrives to this weekend's Hungarian Grand Prix.

The British driver also knows better than anyone how to win on the Hungaroring's tight corners. He holds a record eight wins here, with his last triumph coming in 2020. Hamilton stunned the sport by announcing that he was leaving for Ferrari in 2025. He has since insisted that his focus in completely on making the most of his final months with Mercedes.

With five different winners in the last seven races, it is clear that it is no longer a foregone conclusion that Red Bull will sweep up most of the victories. Verstappen still commands a healthy lead on 255 points, with McLaren's Lando Norris in second with 171. But the Dutch driver is now facing fast challengers from three different teams when you include the Ferrari's of Charles Leclerc and Carlos Sainz. —*PTI*



Verstappen PHOTO: PTI

- Mercedes has elbowed its way into the most tightly contested Formula One season since three-time reigning champion Max Verstappen wrested the mantle of serial winner from Hamilton in 2021.

Mansukh: 1L athletes to be identified under KIRTI

NEW DELHI, 19 JULY

Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Friday launched the second phase of the KIRTI project with an aim to identify one lakh young athletes within 100 days, for support.

He felt the nationwide talent hunt under Khelo India Rising Talent Identification (KIRTI) will prove to be a stepping stone to making India one of the top five nations in the Olympic Games by 2047.

"India is full of diversity and potential. There has never been a shortage of brainpower, manpower, or talent in India," said Mandaviya after launching the second phase of the programme at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium here.

Mansukh Mandaviya PHOTO: PTI

"Not just the cities, but even in our far-flung areas like the North-East, Coastal, Himalayan and tribal areas can have a quality sportsperson there."

In the third Phase, the KIRTI program will include all 20 disciplines of the Khelo India scheme. The first phase of KIRTI was launched in Chandigarh on March 12 this year. —*PTI*

BOON FOR CRICKETERS

Sign language will help hearing-impaired

MUMBAI, 19 JULY

If the indomitable Ian Smith's electrifying description in of Suryakumar Yadav's boundary line catch in the T20 World Cup final or Jatin Sapru's passionate call for 'long-off, long-off...!' delighted billions of Indians watching history being made on TV, a new section of fans also lived the experience with similar passion thanks to sign language commentary.

A recently-included aspect in TV broadcast, sign language commentary has added a new aspect to watching a cricket match on TV for those who are deaf or are from the hard-of-hearing community.

And it includes players and fans alike who would set themselves up in front of TVs to follow the Indian team but would not get to live the experience like a regular fan, who would go through the upheavals of the game and commentary while also being educated.

Indian Deaf Cricket Team players PHOTO: PTI

In order to make this happen, official streaming service Disney+ Hotstar teamed up with Indian Sign Language to provide ball-by-ball updates through the presence of a translator on the live stream.

The audio descriptive feed was complemented by voice-over technology for specific pages, which rendered text and images into a speech output, enabling visually impaired users to easily navigate.

Even if they lived the experience of watching India become T20 world champions for a second time through commentary, it still was something they had not felt before.

"During the final, the famous catch from Surya Kumar Yadav, I could see the entire crowd making noise and the commentators' excitement only due to the interpretation and that doubled my excitement," said Yadnesh Maladkar, a fan. —*PTI*